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ESSAYS

HISTORICAL AND MORAL.

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HISTORICAL MORAL

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ESSAYS

HISTORICAL AND MORAL.

BY

G. GREGORY, F. A. S.

Εἰ γὰρ λαβὼν ἕκαστος ὃ, τι δύναίτο τις
Χρῆσθαι, διελθοὶ τὸτο, κείς κοινὸν φέροι
Παῖριδι, κακῶν αὖ αἱ πόλεις ἐλασσόνων
Πειρωμέναι, τοιοῦτον εὐτυχοῖεν αὖ.

EURIP.

THE SECOND EDITION,
WITH CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS.

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ALFRED A. MORAL

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ALFRED A. MORAL

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ALFRED A. MORAL

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE
EARL OF LEICESTER,
PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY
OF ANTIQUARIES, LONDON.

MY LORD,

A WORK which professes to treat of all the higher and more useful topics in the science of Antiquities, could not be inscribed with so much propriety to any person as to the President of that respectable Society, which has cultivated these subjects with so much vigour and success. If it were necessary to assign any further reason for having requested your Lord-

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ship's

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ship's patronage on this occasion, I would add, that I have, in this volume, endeavoured to investigate, with some degree of precision, the grounds and principles of that constitution of which your Lordship, and your illustrious family, have ever demonstrated yourselves zealous and able defenders.

I have the Honour to be,

with great Respect,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's obliged Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

Winkworth Buildings,
City Road, April 16th 1788.



PREFACE

P R E F A C E
TO THE SECOND EDITION.

*W*HEN the following Essays were first presented to the world, I conceived it the fairest mode of proceeding, to permit them to pronounce their own panegyrick or condemnation, without attempting either to deprecate the severity of the critic, or to conciliate the admiration of the less enlightened reader, by any apologies or encomiums of my own.

The favourable reception which they have experienced, has however in some degree altered the situation of their author; and approbation on the part of the public, seems naturally to challenge some degree of confidence on mine. I embrace the opportunity, therefore, of informing my readers, that these Essays are selected from a quantity of materials which I had formerly collected for a much larger work, intended to exhibit a comprehensive view of all the principal circumstances in the history of mankind. The little encouragement which is bestowed on laborious and extensive publications, and, in some measure, the want of leisure, deterred me from pur-

suings this plan; and I determined to digest my principal materials into a more popular form.

With a view of rendering them more acceptable to those persons who read chiefly for entertainment, I preferred a miscellaneous to a systematic arrangement. For, as I had not explained, in any prefatory address, the nature and intention of the work, I disposed the several parts in that form which I supposed most calculated to relieve the attention by varying the subject. In this second edition I have thought proper to depart from this plan; and, to render my work more useful, I have distributed it into two Parts, and have disposed the different subjects of the first Part in such a manner as to answer in some degree the end which I had first intended when I collected the materials. Thus the first Essay exhibits a general view of the principal circumstances which seem to have attended the human race in their progress from barbarism to refinement; the second is intended to remove a false theory of national character, and the institution of government, religion, &c.; the third relates the principal facts which are on record concerning the establishment of the first societies and empires of the world; the fourth and fifth offer a short history and explanation of the foundations of religious and moral prejudices; the sixth consists of a brief comparison between the present and former ages; the seventh, eighth,

eighth, and ninth, contain an inquiry into the principles of government; and the three last are confined to the theory of morals.—The second Part consists of a collection of miscellaneous essays, not entirely unconnected with the preceding, but less susceptible of a systematic arrangement.

Of these Essays, those which are now contained in the first Part, have been least popular, and those which have attracted the least notice of all, are, in my own estimation, the most valuable; I mean the political.—Short and even trifling as they may appear, they have cost some reading and much cool and impartial investigation. The word impartial may perhaps be supposed to want some explanation: if to be impartial, it is necessary to indulge no preference to any form of government whatever, I relinquish my claim to the epithet. By this phrase I would be understood to mean only, that I proceeded on my inquiry with no object but the truth in view; and committed my sentiments to paper, without the smallest perceptible bias upon my mind. No man, who enjoys the blessings of this free constitution, can have fewer obligations to both Church and State than myself. I never had the remotest connexion with the great actors in the party disputes of the day, nor am I likely now to seek it. I never was possessed of any preferment, nor have I the most distant prospect of obtaining any. I know too well

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the venal system which pervades every class of society, to delude myself with the ridiculous expectation of a favour, where there can be no return. After all, the best proof which I can offer on this subject will be the arguments themselves; if they are not convincing to the eye of unprejudiced reason, it will be in vain to alledge the purity of their author's intentions.

In this edition I have found it necessary to make considerable alterations. I have added two new Essays (the third of the first Part, and the eighth of the second) and the fourth Essay of the first Part is almost entirely re-written. This, I confess, is scarcely consistent with gratitude to the purchasers of the first edition; but the fact is, that the subjects contained in this publication, being some of the most interesting to human nature, I conceived myself bound, by a superior duty to the public, to send it forth in as perfect a state as I possibly could. The notes which have been added to this edition, are distinguished in general by the letter N.



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OF THE GOOD POLICY

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PART I.

ESSAY I.

OF THE PROGRESS OF MANNERS AND SOCIETY.

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TO investigate, through the medium of historical evidence, the principles of moral action, if not the most sublime, is at least the most agreeable method of philosophising. It leads us forward, as far as it leads us, upon firm ground; and conducts by certain natural grada-

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tions,

tions, less liable to error, and less fatiguing to the understanding, than abstract reasoning and metaphysical refinement. It may allure indolence itself, by the prospect of attaining knowledge without any violent exertion; and, even where it does not instruct, will scarcely fail to entertain.

In the infancy of a science, we are not to wonder that authors should be more intent on accumulating facts, than on applying them to the discrimination of causes. To remedy this material defect in our latest writers on the history of man, was the original intention of the following pages: and though my success in the execution has not equalled my wishes or my hopes—where little has been already done, even a feeble attempt is not without some claim to merit, if to no other merit, than that of exploring and opening the road to more fortunate adventurers.

The ORIGIN of MANKIND is of little importance to the immediate subject of this Essay. It may not be improper, however, to signify my assent to what appears the most probable, as well as the best authenticated opinion; that, I mean, which derives the human race from one original stock: an opinion most agreeable to the great simplicity observable in the works of Providence; supported by the most ancient traditions of all nations;

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and

and the possibility of which has never been disproved. Population, we know, proceeds with incredible rapidity in favourable situations. We have no evidence, that the power of climate is incapable of producing a difference in the external appearance, answerable to that which characterises the inhabitants of the different regions of the earth; the resemblance, indeed, in colour and aspect, which people in similar situations bear to one another, almost leaves the opinion which I now controvert without an argument in its favour. An author of repute has demonstrated how little credit is due to the extraordinary pretensions which some nations have made to superior antiquity; pretensions fabricated by national vanity, or grounded in mistake¹. Nor could any thing less than the extreme of prejudice lead men to reject, for the indigested fables of Chinese superstition, information commonly received as from an inspired source, and confirmed by the records and chronology of the most polished nations of the heathen world².

¹ M. de Guignes. It is probable that, China being originally divided into several petty states, the distinct races of the petty kings of those states have been, through the obscurity and confusion of the ancient historians of that country, mistaken for different races of imperial monarchs.

² See Sir Isaac Newton's Chronology.

How the DISPERSION of mankind was effected, is not clearly deducible from profane history. The sacred writers have furnished us with one cause, by which it might be at least promoted; and it is easy to imagine that the deficiency of food, mutual animosities between different families, or fear, or distrust, might occasion emigrations at a very early period.

There is no need of experiment to understand what human nature would be in an UNSOCIAL STATE. The best philosophy, which traces the gradual progress of the mind, in the acquisition of ideas through the means of the senses, proves how much we are the creatures of art and imitation: and we may be easily convinced, that to one sense alone, which may be called *the social sense*, we are indebted for all the most valuable part of our knowledge. We have no instance of the human species being found in an unsocial state; except a solitary savage or two that have accidentally appeared, who having been lost or exposed in infancy, supported for a few years a kind of instinctive life, almost equal to the brutes in hardness and agility, and very little superior in mind or sentiment.

The improbability of human creatures existing in a solitary state, has been frequently insisted on by moral writers; and the arguments grounded
on

on the weakness of infancy, and the defenceless nature of man, are very generally known. To these I will add, that the greater capacity of the human faculties admits of a greater diversity, as well as of more durable passions and affections, than any other creature can be supposed to possess. During infancy, a mutual affection is generated between the parent and the child, which generally proves a bond of union for the remainder of their lives. In the mean time, other affections are produced between the members of the same family; and a little society is created, even before they could be in a state to separate¹.

Ancient authors have agreed in representing the FIRST STAGE of Society as very few degrees removed from a state of mere animal instinct. The first men, they inform us, led a wild and disorderly life, scattered up and down the fields, and subsisting upon herbs and the spontaneous fruits of the trees; naked, without the use of arts or fire, without stores or granaries; their vocal sounds confused and indefinite; they were forced into society only through the fear of crea-

¹ This deduction is confirmed by the testimony of history, and particularly of sacred history, whence we learn, that mankind never did actually exist in any other than a social state.

tures more savage than themselves¹. Whether this description be drawn from observation or fancy², it is certain, that the accounts of modern voyagers present us with pictures of human life scarcely less desolate or savage. The natives of Mallicollo are described by Forster, as bordering nearly on the tribe of monkeys³. The same adventurer met, to the south of the Straits of Ma-

¹ Τες δὲ ἐξ ἀρχῆς γεννηθέντες τῶν ἀνθρώπων φασιν ἐν ἀταλῇ δὲ θνητῷ βίῳ καθεστῆσθαι, σποραδὶ ἐπὶ τὰς νομάς ἐξίναί, καὶ προσφίεσθαι τῆς τε βοτάνης τὴν προσηνιγὰν καὶ τῆς αὐτομάτης ἀπὸ τῶν δένδρων καρπῶς. κ. τ. λ. Diod. Sic. l. i. f. 1.

“Cum proreperunt primis animalia terris,

“Mutum et turpe pecus,” &c.

HOR. Sat. L. I. S. iii. v. 98.

See Hom. Od. T. 163; & Clarke in loc. & Juv. Sat. vi. 1—15. Compare with Dampier, v. i. p. 464; Cook's last voyage, v. i. p. 96. 101. 113.

² It is most probable, that observation furnished the groundwork of the picture; and that it has been a little heightened by the imagination. This supposition is not contradicted by the facts related in the first pages of the scripture history. The bulk of mankind appear to have been in an extremely rude state, even to the patriarchal ages. God had, indeed, enlightened the minds of a few particular persons; but the knowledge which he was thus pleased to impart, extended for many ages only to a very narrow circle, though it is probable mankind are entirely indebted to it for their civilization.

³ Forf. Ob. p. 242.

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gellan, a people deformed, and naked, except that a piece of seal skin hung down their backs; and whose countenances announced nothing but their wretchedness¹. Later accounts inform us, that the inhabitants of Van Diemen's Land are also naked, both men and women; only that those, who have children, have the skin of an animal, apparently to carry them in².

If we look among savage nations for that GOLDEN AGE of tranquillity and happiness, which some authors celebrate as the natural state of man, I apprehend we shall do wrong to place it in the total insensibility of this stage of society, which appears utterly destitute of all the most estimable pleasures. The people I have just mentioned readily accepted every thing which was given them, but seemed to set no particular value upon any thing³. In Terra del Fuego, says Forster, they looked at the ship, and all its parts, with stupidity and indolence⁴. They shewed no signs of joy or happiness, and seemed insensible to all the moral, natural, or social

¹ Forf. Ob. p. 251.

² Ellis's voyage. Cook's last voyage, v. i. p. 96. 101. Herodotus mentions a people on the lakes formed by the Araxes, who eat raw fish, and were clothed in the skins of sea calves. Lib. i. c. 202.

³ Cook's last voyage, v. i. p. 97.

⁴ Forf. Ob. 288.

feelings and enjoyments¹. At Dusky Bay, in New Zealand, Captain Cook found three or four families in almost the lowest degree of rational existence. He describes them as destitute of curiosity, without any spirit of inquiry, and incapable of retaining their minds fixed upon any thing. Music had not the least effect upon them; they were quite deaf to the more melodious instruments; the drum alone seemed a little to awake their attention². Not only the social ties of love and friendship are weak in this stage of human nature, but even what are called the natural affections seem scarcely to exist: they have little care of their children; and the indifference of the sexes towards each other, has led authors to suspect a community of women. The antients gravely assure us that this was actually the case with the Massagetæ³, with the Garamantes⁴, with several African nations⁵, and even with the Britons⁶; but I do not find any certain

¹ Forf. Ob. 290.

² Cook's voyage, vol. i.

³ Diog. Laert. Pyrrh. p. 684.

⁴ Pliny.

⁵ Herod. l. iv. c. 172 & 180.

⁶ Cæs. de Bell. Gall. l. v. c. 14. He informs us, in particular, that the wives of brothers were in common among them; also between father and son. He adds, however, that the children belong to those who first married the virgin; which circumstance induces me to doubt the fact altogether.

evidence

evidence of a community of wives among the more accurate observations of the moderns. A friend of mine, a very intelligent man, who accompanied Captain Cook in his last voyage, assured me he could in no part of the world observe any traces of such a custom. The husbands and parents, in many parts of South America, prostituted their wives and daughters for trifling rewards: and this circumstance, and a total deprivation of all ideas of shame and modesty, might lead to the mistake¹. I am inclined to believe that men, in this state, are not in general cannibals; being universally described as less fierce and savage than in the succeeding stage of society.

There can scarcely exist, and perhaps there is little occasion for GOVERNMENT, or subordination, among men who have little bond of connection, and few objects to stimulate their passions. The gentleman, whom I have just had occasion to mention, said that, among several rude nations, he could discern nothing like subordination, further than a degree of deference which was paid to the advice of the old men²: and Mr. Bougainville remarks that such was the situation of the Patagonians.

¹ In Easter Islands, they propagate publicly. See Russia, or, An Account of the Nations, &c.

² Cook's last voyage, v. i. p. 102.

The RELIGIOUS notions of men, so incapable of reflection, must necessarily be very rude and imperfect. If I recollect rightly, Bayle has produced some instances of societies existing in a rude state *without religion*; and an intelligent writer, in his account of Porto de la Trinidad, assures us, that he had every reason to believe that the Indians there were *perfect atheists*¹: the same is related of the natives of certain little islands east of Kamschatcha².

The ARTS of men, in the state which I have been describing, are very simple and very few. The natives of those islands east of Kamschatcha, above-mentioned, live in holes dug in the earth, in which they make no fires even in winter. Their clothes are made like shirts, of the skins of the guillinot and puffin, which they catch in springes; over these, in rainy weather, they wear an upper garment made of bladders, and other intestines of seals and sea-lions, oiled. They eat raw fish, lay up no store of provisions, and consequently suffer much from hunger in stormy weather, when they cannot fish. If they pass the night from home, they dig a hole in the

¹ D. Francisco Maurelli; translated by the Hon. Daines Barrington.

² Coxe's Russian Discoveries.

ground,

ground, and cover themselves in it with their clothes, and with mats of platted grafs¹. It seems to be nothing but the mere inclemency of climate, which has impelled these very uninformed people to the use of clothing; for, in Van Diemen's Land, a people nearly such as those we have been describing go naked, and yet have some notion of ornament, as they mark their arms and breasts with lines in different directions, and shave their heads all to a narrow circle². The huts in Terra del Fuego are made by joining the neighbouring shrubs together, forming a kind of shell by sticks to support them, and covering the whole with wisps of dry grafs, and here and there a few pieces of seal skin. In Van Diemen's Land they live in similar huts, or in the trunks of trees hollowed by fire apparently for that purpose³.

So impotent a being is man, so bounded are his faculties when unaided by superior wisdom, that we find human nature has existed even for ages in this comfortless state; and, I am well convinced, would still have existed in it, had not the Deity, by successive revelations, gradually enlightened the human mind; afforded it informa-

¹ Coxe's Russian Discoveries.

² Ellis's voyage. Cook's last voyage, v. i. p. 96. 102.

³ See Cook's last voyage, v. i. p. 101. 113.

tion,

tion, which, by its own powers, it could not have obtained, and by these means called into action the intellectual faculties. Whoever observes the different revelations, which are recorded in the sacred history, will find them exactly proportioned to the state of man at the period when they were made, and calculated to conduct him to further improvement. Other causes, doubtless, have co-operated in promoting the civilization of mankind; and among these a few inventions, which we may venture to call casual, have had no inconsiderable influence, by teaching them, that there are comforts and enjoyments to be obtained beyond the mere supply of their necessities. Diodorus Siculus informs us, that *fire* was first derived from a tree, which was struck by lightning¹. Whether we treat this tradition as fabulous or not, it is certain many useful inventions have been equally casual. The natural arches of the woods, and the caves formed by the clefts of rocks, might suggest the idea of huts and covered habitations. The first manual arts cer-

¹ Lib. i. 11. Lucret. v. 1092.—The modes of producing fire are two; by collision of two stones, or by attrition of two pieces of wood. The latter mode is pursued by the Brazilians, Otaheiteans, New Hollanders, Kamschadales, Greenlanders, and in general by all the Northern nations. —Cook's last voyage, v. ii. p. 514.

tainly respected hunting and fishing; and the most simple mode of ensnaring wild beasts, is evidently by digging a pit in the earth, and covering it with sticks and leaves; a method which we find still practised by many barbarous nations.

The ORNAMENTAL ARTS succeed the useful in a slow progression. The first ornaments are attached to the person, and seem dictated only by the appetite for *variety*. Two circumstances, which materially affect the moral character, attend the introduction of arts. A degree of eminence is acquired by those who excel, and of consequence something of authority; and the *boarding* or *avaricious* principle is called into action, whence originate wars and government.

The first WARS probably arose from private quarrels, by which the tribe would be divided into different parties. The victorious party would naturally be induced to try their force upon some neighbouring tribe: and the jealousy of each others possessions would be motive sufficient to induce them to commit depredations.

The SECOND STATE of MAN may, therefore, properly be called the *state of war*. Without any fixed habitations, mankind in this state depend upon the chase for their daily subsistence: the
females

females partake with the men in their sports, their toils, and their excesses; they have little care of their offspring, and leave them, without fear or compunction, at the mercy of chance, while they themselves pursue the different avocations of business or pleasure¹. They are bold and cruel, from their precarious mode of existence; their food and their enjoyments being the effects of their courage, they deem it the only quality which is worth cultivation². Though hardy, and enduring with heroic fortitude the fatigues of war—though hunger, and the rigours of the seasons, are supported by them with a degree of brutal insensibility—they sink under labour³: to the toil of agriculture they are incapable of submitting; and the patient expectation of the husbandman they affect to despise⁴. Their indolence is extreme, except when pressed by necessity, or provoked by revenge⁵. The greater portion of their time is dedicated to banquetting and sleep⁶. Their intemperance in eating is extreme, but they have little propensity to the pleasures of love. The coldness and indifference

¹ Tac. Ger. c. 46.

² Id. 14.

³ Id. 4.

⁴ Nec arare terram, aut expectare annum, tam facile persuaseris, quam vocare hostes et vulnera mereri.—Tac. Ger. 14.

⁵ Id. 15.

⁶ Ibid,

to the fair sex, observable in the American Indians, and which an ingenious historian¹ attributes to the climate, is an uniform characteristic of this rude state of society.

Their CHIEFS I believe to be only temporary or occasional, and chosen for their stature and activity²; who, after the expedition which they are selected to command, sink into a common equality with the rest of the tribe. Even in a more advanced state of civilization, we learn from Tacitus, that there was no difference of rank among the *young* of the German nations, being in no degree elevated above the servants, and very little above the cattle³. Incapable of a continued chain of reasoning, the views of men in this state are only for the moment; they are even inconstant in their passions; or if any of their passions be permanent, it is *revenge* alone. The foundations of LAW and JUSTICE are laid in revenge. If a murder was committed, the kinsmen of the deceased held themselves under an obligation to sacrifice the murderer; but when property became desirable, they found it preferable to suffer the object of their resentment

¹ Abbé Raynal.

² The Ethiopians chose their kings for those qualities.
Herod.

³ Ger. 20.

to *purchase* his absolution : thus, among the Germans, as amongst most uncivilized nations, homicide was commuted for by a fine¹. In one of the barbarous nations of Siberia, it is held criminal to murder in the tribe or family to which they belong ; but, committed elsewhere, it not only passes unpunished, but is held in a degree of honour².

The primitive TRADITION of RELIGION was certainly preserved in a degree of purity by one people only ; amongst them it was supported by successive revelations : and I can conceive it possible, that, after the dispersion of mankind, it might be totally lost by some tribes. In that case, the more striking phænomena of nature might serve to recal a few principles of religious belief, mingled with errors, and obscured by analogical reasoning. We observe beneath us a number of subordinate ranks of being, whose existence depends upon our will, and *to which we are as Gods* ; it is therefore natural to suppose, that the great convulsions of nature, which so continually threaten, and so often effect, our dissolution, are the work of beings of a superior order. The Altayan Tartars describe the Deity as an old man, who

¹ Tac. Ger. 21.

² Russia, or, An Historical Account, &c.

keeps

keeps a brilliant court. The noise of his horsemen, they say, is what we call thunder; and the lightning is produced by the collision of his horses feet ¹. Rude notions of religion, whether traditional and defaced by superstition, or whether natural and formed by analogy, are always found among men in the state which I have been now describing: the fears, the fancy, and the policy of individuals mould them afterwards into a system.

Into this second period of society, history has traced many of the tribes of Greece ²; of Germany ³, of Britain ⁴. The more authentic accounts of the empire of China inform us, that not more than 1000 years before our Christian æra, there were no cities in that extensive country; that it was peopled by different tribes of unsettled barbarians; and that several little kingdoms were formed there towards the close of the ninth century ⁵.

In a general review of the progress of human nature, we can only remark the strong and decisive shades of character; the variations are many and minute, that take place in the advances to-

¹ Russia, or, An Historical Account, &c.

² Herod. l. i. c. 57.

³ Tac. Ger. 46,

⁴ Cæf. de Bell. Gall,

⁵ Mem. de M. de Guignès.

wards civilization ; and these again receive a peculiar tinge from local and casual circumstances. The **THIRD PERIOD** of Society is distinguished by the solicitude of providing for future wants ; whence fixed habitations, property, and laws. The pleasures of life are more assiduously attended to—the torch of love is lighted in the human breast ; though, according to the notions of barbarous nations, force and occupancy confer right, and the female sex are made an abject property by their rude enslavers. The several senses being awakened to enjoyment, the passion for ornament gains upon the mind. The first dawnings of this passion appear in the glaring colours with which savages stain the different parts of their bodies : it is soon extended to trinkets ; and in a little time every convenience of dress is made subservient to it.

The introduction of arts, I have already remarked, serves to excite the *hoarding principle**, and to destroy the natural *equality* of men : industry, genius, chance, and paternal authority, come in aid, and often conduct by a rapid gradation to subordination and slavery. In this æra of society there arise persons both wealthy and powerful, who of course attract a multitude of clients and

* What Aristotle calls ἡ χρηματιστικὴ.—De Rep.

domestics ;

domestics; though each family or household is in itself a distinct society, and every man exercises the several arts necessary to his subsistence. The queen of Macedon, in the time of Xerxes, *cooked* for her husband's shepherds; in his cattle his riches consisted¹: and such was the wealth of the interior Britons at the invasion of Cæsar². The *heroes* of Homer are found engaged in very mean occupations: they not only provide the banquet, but *prepare it with their own hands*³. The royal females are not above the *labours* of the *loom*, and even condescend to participate in more laborious and servile employments⁴. But we are not to conclude that poverty, or a want of assistance, reduced them to this necessity; the magnificence of their courts, their military power, and the abundance of their wealth, are sufficient proofs of the contrary. The truth is, the useful arts preceded those of luxury; and as ingenuity

¹ Herod. l. viii. c. 137.

² De Bell. Gall. l. v. c. 14.

³ Il. l. ix. v. 205.

⁴ The Princess of Phæacia, with the first ladies of her Court, is said in the *Odyssey* to

—“ seek the cisterns where Phæacian dames

“ Wash their fair garments in the limpid streams;

“ Then emulous the royal robes *they lave*,

“ And plunge the vestures in the cleansing wave.”

Lib. vi.

See GEN. xxiv. 15. xxix. 9. EXOD. ii. 5.

is always honourable, it is a commendation to excel in whatever arts are known. Before letters were invented, the abstract sciences cultivated, and games of chance in common use, there was no other employment for man but the military or domestic; and, in the intervals of the former, to be engaged in the latter, was not esteemed disreputable.

The *right of occupancy* dictated the opinion, that superior FORCE conferred a right on its possessor. If a man had a just claim to whatever the earth presented, he supposed he had a right to contend for it with another: if he might take the possessions, or even the life, of another person, he would easily fancy he had a right to his personal service. The parent, who produced and brought up a child, would of course imagine he had a right to use that child as he pleased; parental authority is therefore very extensive in the first stages of society. From these sources originate *slavery*, and the *subjection of the female sex*. When women come to be considered as a *property*, men will endeavour to engross them, as well as any other means of luxury: hence a multiplicity of wives, with all who can purchase and maintain them, is a custom common to this period of society; and women are as much objects of plunder and rapine as any other moveable.

I have

I have already remarked, that the first wars probably arose from private quarrels. Each of the champions, we may suppose, found a number of supporters, who in the heat of the contest, from kindred, friendship, or caprice, attached themselves to him. If possessed of courage and sagacity, he would naturally become the leader of the band; if not, some other of the party, possessing those accomplishments, would take the active, consequently the leading, part: and thus a temporary sovereignty is erected. War was afterwards made for the sake of plunder¹. The little islands of Greece preyed upon each other: a bribe could command an army; and any pretext was sufficient to commence a war. It is plain that when troops follow a leader merely through venal motives, as long as he can satisfy their avarice, they will remain attached to him². A strong argument against the *patriarchal scheme* of GOVERNMENT is, that, in most nations upon record, a state of anarchy seems to have preceded a kind of feudal establishment, which has generally terminated in despotism. The Scythians acquired an hereditary contempt for the Ionians, because they did not betray Darius in Scythia,

¹ See the arguments made use of by Aristagoras, to engage the Spartans in the Persian war.—Herod. l. v. c. 49.

² Tac. Ger. 13.

and become free¹. The early Greeks are represented by Thucydides as a number of petty feudal states². In Homer we find the kings only absolute in war³, and the chief vassals nearly equal in power with the kings⁴. Livy represents the Roman nobility nearly on a par with the prince⁵; but they sunk gradually in estimation till the time of the Tarquins. I might adduce the example of the Germans⁶, and other northern nations. Thus we are furnished with a natural history of despotism. The people are originally free, and without government; but by degrees they become subject to those who have supported them in any gallant action, or attracted them by the admiration of military achievements. These chiefs, for the same reasons, become dependent upon other *chiefs*: and at last the distinction between the petty lords and the people is lost in the fulness of monarchical splendor.

In most *governments*, the mass of the people soon begin to experience the iron hand of power. The moral ideas are perverted by the supposed right of occupancy and force. The ab-

¹ Herod. l. iv. c. 142.

² Thuc. l. i.

³ Iliad

passim.

⁴ Odyssey, latter books,

⁵ Lib. i.

⁶ Tac. Ger. 11.

absolute authority of parents produces habits of fear and subjection, which prepare the mind for public slavery. The conquests obtained over his neighbours by a powerful chief, seem to confer a right over them, as over any species of property; which divides the community into two parties, the victors and the vanquished—equivalent to the terms lords and servants. Hesiod distinguishes the monarchs of his age by a peculiar epithet, which means *gift-devouring*¹. We are informed by Cæsar, that in Gaul, the common people, oppressed by debts, by tributes, and by the power of the nobles, were in a state of the most intolerable vassalage; and that the nobility exerted nearly the same authority over them, as masters over slaves². At the Friendly Isles, Attaha, one of the inferior chiefs, was obliged to deliver all the presents he had received to their Latoo-Niporoo; this was likewise practised by all the other chiefs: the priest is the only man of the nation exempted from this humiliating mark of dependence. Though at Otaheite there is an appearance of independence in the people, yet, when one of the lower ranks *stole* any valuable articles, the chief seized the whole booty, or shared it with the prince: and

¹ Δωροφάγος.

² De Bell. Gall. l. vi. c. 13.

though the chiefs did not *forcibly* deprive individuals of the effects which they had received in commerce, it was found, after some time, that all the wealth which they acquired flowed as *presents* into the treasuries of the several chiefs, who, it seems, were the only possessors of the hatchets and broad axes, and who granted the use of them occasionally to the subjects, probably for some acknowledgment¹.

A different theory of GOVERNMENT is adopted by Cicero, who supposes it instituted purely for the *sake of the equal distribution of justice*. The multitude, says he, groaning beneath the oppression of the wealthy, betook themselves to some one of exemplary virtue, who might protect the weak from injury, and restrain the powerful by the settled rules of equity and right². He il-

¹ Forf. Ob. p. 370. See Cook's last voyage, v. i. p. 406.

² De Off. l. ii. c. 41. The Dean of Gloucester is, I think, scarcely warranted, in supposing Cicero an advocate for the system of an instinctive inclination for government. Not only this passage, but many others, might be produced against him. The opinion supported by Mr. Locke, That men are driven into society by their fears, is borrowed from the ancients; the universal opinion of whom it was (whether true or false) that there was a time when men existed in a state of anarchy, and were united in civil government by a general compact.—See the Essay on the Theory of Government.

illustrates his opinion by the remarkable history of the origin of government among the Medes, as related by Herodotus¹; and even asserts the same of his own nation. I wish, for the credit of human reason, I could subscribe to the theory.

Aristotle says positively, that kingly government preceded every other form²; and such indeed was the prevailing opinion of the ancients. But though we are accustomed to associate the idea of hereditary right with monarchical government, I do not find that the first governments were uniformly hereditary. The notion of *right* annexed to power, extends even to the attainment of the supreme authority; few princes therefore ascended the throne, in the early ages, without violence and bloodshed among the contending kindred or vassals of the deceased monarch.

Though we have seen the first Governments exerting a very considerable share of power in the oppression of the subjects, the same power is by no means exerted in the ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE. The intelligent voyager, to whom I am indebted for so much oral information, assured me, that in most of the barbarous coun-

¹ L. i. c. 96.

² De Rep. l. i. c. 2.

tries which he visited with Captain Cook in his last voyage, he could discern no traces of established laws or juridical authority¹. Every man seemed to be the avenger of his own wrongs; and the chiefs took no active part, except in endeavouring to keep peace, when private feuds arose to an alarming excess. Government appeared among these savage people to be purely a military institution.

We know that, in the early times, the duty of punishing MURDER devolved upon the next of kin. But this was found to generate perpetual feuds; whoever had killed the *last man* being equally obnoxious to the family of the other party: one of the first laws of Greece, therefore, limited the sentence of murder to banishment². I am inclined to think that CIVIL LAWS might originate from private compacts made among a few, to protect the persons and property of one another, pursuant to certain regulations; and these regulations might in process of time be adopted by the community. In this view of the subject, we may perhaps find the reason

¹ See Cook's last voyage, v. i. p. 161.

² Καλως εθελσ ταυτα παλαιοι οι παλαι,

Εις ομματα μεν οφιν εκ των περα,

Ουδ' εις απαντημ' οσις, αιμ' εχων κυρει

Φυγας, δ' ωσιεν, αποκλιναι δε μη. Eurip. Orest. v. 512.

why

why the philosophers of old applied themselves chiefly to the study of law and police : and perhaps it may throw some light on the nature of the jurisprudence of the northern people, among whom all trials were popular, that is, by an assembly, or allotted number, of the peers or equals of the criminal.

We are told, that at Otaheite thieves are put to death by tying a stone to their necks, and drowning them in the sea ; and the natives assert, that adultery is punished with death ¹. It is to be regretted that voyagers have not informed us, who were the judges that tried and punished these offences, as it does not appear that in rude nations the administration of justice is always annexed to the office of the prince ². The druids, among the Gauls, decided all controversies public and private, and tried and punished criminals ³. The public council of the German nations took cognizance of crimes : traitors and deserters they hung upon trees ; the slothful, the dissolute, the cowardly, and the deformed, they sunk in the marshes, and covered with

¹ Forf. Ob.—I think, but do not recollect the place.

² I have since been informed, that the judges are the princes and the priests ; but the trial is of a very summary nature.

³ Cæs. de Bell. Gall.

hurdles.

hurdles. The punishment, says Tacitus, took that form, which was suited to the nature of the crime: offences against the public were exposed; and infamy, while it met with its deserts, was consigned to oblivion. Lesser crimes were commuted for by fines, which were paid in horses or in cattle; a moiety of the fine was claimed by the prince or the state, and a moiety by the injured party or his family¹.

There is, as I lately observed, an evident progression in REVELATION, adapted to the capacities of mankind in different ages. Religion, among the Jews, assumed at first a formal, ceremonious appearance; the precepts of the latter Prophets are more spiritual, abstracted, and refined; the Gospel is the perfection of morality. If *Revealed Religion* then be adapted to the capacities, and receive a tinge from the manners of those among whom it is promulged, it may well be supposed that NATURAL RELIGION will be perverted by many superstitious notions. Savages always unite ideas of *violence* and *terror* with that of *power*; their Deities are always objects of fear, as we may judge from their idols; they are supposed to have a pleasure in cruelty, and only to be appeased by the most valuable of-

¹ Tac. Ger. c. 12.

ferings. It is a fact established beyond contradiction, that *human sacrifices* have been universal in what I call the third æra of society. We have our information from an eye-witness of the horrid rite, as performed in one of the South Sea Islands¹. Human sacrifices were common in Mexico, and even in Peru: at the death of one of the Mexican monarchs, not less than one thousand of his domestics were offered up². The accounts of the human sacrifices of the druids have been contradicted by a late writer on Gallic antiquities³, who asserts, that what was mistaken for a sacrifice, was nothing more than the execution of a criminal. I find a shew of probability in his favour, from a circumstance already mentioned, namely, that the whole administration of justice lay with the Druids⁴; and it was part of their doctrine, that the punishment of thieves and robbers, and of all civil offences, was grateful to the Deity⁵. If, however, we look into the history of these sacrifices, as practised by other nations, we shall find that young virgins, and the purest and most innocent persons, were singled

¹ See Cook's last voyage.

² Robertson's Hist. of America.

³ Mr. M'Nicholl, in his Answer to Dr. Johnson.

⁴ Cæs. de Bell. Gall. l. vi. c. 13.

⁵ Id. l. vi. c. 16.

out as most acceptable to the Gods¹. The Gallic Druids held the doctrine of the immortality and transmigration of the soul; and by these means inculcated a remarkable contempt of death in the people². The natives of the South Sea Islands acknowledge a being within their bodies, which sees, hears, tastes, and feels, and which they call *Eteebee*; and they believe that, after the dissolution of the body, it hovers about the corpse, and at last retires into the wooden representations of human bodies erected near their burying places³. The Gauls threw every thing the deceased had in estimation upon the funeral pile; even animals, slaves, and clients; as if he were likely to want them in another life. Thus we find the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, is not, as some modern infidels seem willing to suppose, entirely of Grecian extraction.—The priests acquire among savage people very great authority. We have already seen that they are alone exempted from the tyranny of the chiefs, in the South Sea Islands. The Gallic druids had the education of children entirely entrusted to them, decided all controversies, and were in-

¹ See the *Hecuba*, the *Iphigenia*, and other pieces of Euripides.

² Cæs. de Bell. Gall. l. vi. c. 14.

³ Forster (I think).

vested with the power of electing a chief druid, and, it appears, with the whole regulation of their society.

Some of the useful ARTS make considerable progress in this period of society. Horsemanship is brought to high perfection among the Tartars; and many of the Indian nations, bordering upon the ocean, are expert in every branch of navigation which does not depend upon the mathematical sciences¹. The description of the warlike apparatus of the nations that accompanied Xerxes, serves to mark the gradations of the arts; and it is curious to observe how much the description of some of them agrees with that of the accoutrements of the American Indians. Some had the use of iron, and wore coats of mail, as the Medes and Persians; some had arrows with points of stone, and wore coats of skins; some had javelins pointed with goats horns; some, of wood hardened in the fire; some wore the skin of a horse's head, as a helmet, with the ears erect².

The taste for ornament, at this period, runs into excess. The inhabitants of the Fox Islands, near Kamschatcha, thrust a bone pin, four inches

¹ We may add the instance of a German nation.—Tac. Ger. 44.

² Herod. l. 7.

long.

long, through the nostrils; perforate the under lip, and fix in it beads, or bits of pearl, in the shape of teeth¹. Ornaments in the ears and nose are universal in the South Sea Islands². In Mallicollo, they constrict the belly by a string to such a degree, as no European could bear without the greatest inconvenience³.

The fine arts begin now to make their appearance. The records of some of the American nations were preserved by pictures⁴. Rude poems, and a simple species of music, are produced in this stage of society. The subjects of the former are always love and war⁵.

We contemplate human nature, in each successive stage of refinement, with increasing pleasure. Nor can we fail to admire the dispensa-

¹ Coxe's Account of Russian Discoveries.—This is practised, in Prince William's Sound, so as to give it the effect of another mouth; and the first sailors that landed, actually declared they had seen men with two mouths.—Cook's last voyage, v. ii. p. 365.

² Evidently the use of rings and ear-rings is of savage extraction.

³ Forf. Ob. 243.

⁴ The ignorant Spaniards destroyed the historical records of Mexico, as pieces of idolatry.—Robertson.

⁵ Sunt illis hæc quoque carmina, quorum relatu, quem Barbitum vocant, accendunt animos, futuræque pugnae ipso cantu augurantur.—Tac. Ger. c. 3.

tion of Providence, which renders even the vices of men subservient to the ends of civilization. Avarice, and ambition, and the tempests of WAR, serve to rouse the human mind out of that languid and sedentary state, in which we first contemplate it. The tyranny and avarice of an insatiable Chief lead him to spoil his defenceless neighbour, to usurp his possessions, his wives, his children, his clients ; but frequently the weaker, aware of the danger, flies the inhospitable region, founds a colony, cultivates new arts, and contributes to the population of the world. The fear of invasion drives men into cities ; and there, reciprocal communications, and successive improvements, bring the arts of life to perfection. *War*, though inimical to civilization and refinement after a certain period, is favourable to them at first, by exciting emulation, and encouraging the contending parties to new improvements. The arts of navigation, for instance, were much improved among the Greeks, by the piratical wars which they carried on among themselves, and with the Barbarians. The rage of empire and conquest promoted civilization : for till extensive conquests were made, and many people united under one head, there was little of social intercourse among men. Queen Nitocris expended more wealth and labour in making the

D navigation

navigation of the Euphrates difficult, than any modern improver has expended to facilitate commerce¹. The unsocial temper of the Jews was proverbial; and the Egyptians would not use any thing which had been touched by a Greek². The rapid conquests of the old heroes conciliated a union of the arts, and taught each nation to profit by the inventions of the rest.

The FOURTH PERIOD of Society is respectable for the institution of agriculture, commerce, and established laws: yet still the mind retains a degree of languor and dulness, and men are averse to labour. Hesiod employs as much art and vehemence to excite the spirit of avarice, as modern satirists do to repress it. It is said that Ceres, coming into Attica, taught the people AGRICULTURE and religious worship; in consequence of which the *first-fruits* of the earth were paid by all Greece to the Athenians³. In Hesiod's time, they ploughed with two oxen in Greece; but a little before, when we find the plough had not been invented, the land was tilled by manual labour⁴.

The use of METALS was probably introduced by accident. To some of the most fusible ores,

¹ Herod. l. i. c. 185.

² Id. l. ii. c. 91.

³ Isoc. Paneg. p. 90. Wolfii.

⁴ Op. & Dier. passim.

fire being casually applied, they would probably appear in their metallic state; and, their ductility being discovered, would be applied to use. Perhaps the lustre of most metals was designed by Providence to attract the attention of men to an acquisition of such considerable utility. We learn from Hesiod, that *iron* was well known in his time; before it, *brass* was made use of¹. The first COMMERCE was a mere barter of necessaries². Herodotus says, the Lydians first introduced *coin*, the practice of selling by *retail*, and *games of chance*³: whence we may at least conclude that these inventions are nearly coeval. The Britons, in the time of Cæsar, used brass money, or rings of iron, to a certain weight, instead of money⁴. The standard of *commerce* differs much in different parts of the modern world. In some parts of America, commodities are valued by beavers skins; and on the coast of Guinea, a common standard is a bar of iron, the dimensions of which are, I suppose, ascertained. I am not of opinion that gold and silver were fixed upon as the medium of traffic by any kind of compact among men. Rude people in general admire what is splendid: ornaments are always marketable com-

¹ Op. & Dier. 150.² Arist. de Rep. l. i. c. 9.³ Lib. i. c. 94.⁴ De Bell. Gall. l. v. c. 12.

modities; and the precious metals afforded ornaments that suited every taste. Thus he, who had a handsome necklace, or a bracelet of gold, exchanged it, on some call of appetite, for a dinner or a beauteous captive: and such things being always acceptable, were always marketable; and being the only things that always were so, became in time the standard of *commerce*. The cowries, or shells, which are used in traffic among the Negroes, came into use as money, from having been ornaments of dress.

The Athenians are allowed to be the first of the Greeks who established LAWS; and the inhabitants of the other states of Greece were accustomed to apply at the Athenian tribunals for a rule of determining their particular controversies. Order takes place as soon as the civil rights are defined. Among the first laws of Egypt, was one which forbid any man to exercise more than one trade or profession¹.

When arrived at the proper social and commercial period of society, men not only borrow from each other arts and customs, but even RELIGION. Much of the forms of the Greek worship was imported from Egypt; before which they made use of a vague kind of address to the

¹ Diod. Sic. l. i. f. 1.

Gods in general; nor had they so much as names for their Deities¹. The religion of this period is *polytheism*, and a fanciful kind of superstition, much milder than that of the former period. Manco Capac abolished human sacrifices in Peru, and even those of animals:—He, at least, had made some progress in refinement. That faculty of the human mind, which disposes us too ardently to pursue a favourite idea, is in nothing more illustrated than in the instance of religion. The religion of rude nations is always either fanaticism or bigotry; and there is then scarcely any evil that affects society, with which religion is not directly or indirectly connected. In a civilized state, men look back with a degree of resentment on the mischiefs it has occasioned; and, from the same quality of the mind, religion becomes too much neglected. Thus, like every other blessing and virtue, religion never exists pure in societies; individuals only can possess it in perfection. The arts, however, have been obliged to superstition. When a wealthy person would achieve some darling wish, or escape some imminent danger, he made a vow; which vow was generally accomplished by build-

¹ Herod. l. ii. c. 52, 54, 55.—All the Egyptian learning was indubitably derived from the Hebrews.

ing a magnificent temple, or producing some excellent piece of painting or sculpture.

We have different accounts of the invention of the ARTS : some of the most considerable are claimed by the Egyptians ; among the rest, *Geometry*. It is said that Sesostris divided Egypt into equal portions, assigning to each inhabitant a square piece of land, and reserving a rent to himself. But the inundations of the Nile removed the landmarks, and made encroachments on the property of individuals ; it therefore became necessary to apply to the study of lines and figures, to enable them to rectify the encroachments of the river, and proportionably to lessen the rent¹ : hence the name, *Geometry*.—*Weaving* is said to originate with the same people : I think it probable that the art of *matting*, or plating together with the hand the fibres of vegetables, preceded, and led to that invention. The country of Egypt being unfavourable to the cultivation of the grape, we are said to owe the art of procuring a *beverage from grain* also to the Egyptians.

The progress of the mind is slow to new inventions, but it is rapid in improvements. The ancients excelled in the beautiful forms of their

¹ Herod. l. ii. c. 109.

metal and earthen vases, and their sculpture was perfect; though so simple an invention as that of printing never occurred. The American Indians are ingenious, in some respects, beyond the inhabitants of civilized countries; and yet they are ignorant of many conveniencies of life, which might be attained with far less trouble than it costs to fabricate their fantastical ornaments.

When the feelings are made alive by activity and industry, men are sensible of the inconveniencies of dirt and vermin. Hence industrious nations have ever been remarkable for cleanliness.

The Fourth Period of Society is the period of FANCY, ENTHUSIASM, and ROMANCE. Those sciences and arts which apply themselves immediately to the exterior senses, are the first to be cultivated and admired. The extreme sensibility of the Negroes to *music* is remarkable. A touch of a musical instrument seems to awake them into new life. After the fatigues of a summer's day, they will dance, if they can have music, till they are ready to drop down with lassitude. I am told the ear of many of them is critically nice, and that the variations of the tune may be traced in the contortions of their countenances. I might add, that in all ages the vulgar have been more affected with sound than with sense;

and dancing is one of the first diversions of barbarous people. We have much reason to think, therefore, that the first efforts of philosophy and eloquence were combined with music. Perhaps the facility of retaining verse, might make poetry in some degree necessary before writing was invented. The knowledge of the Gallic Druids was all committed to memory, by means of verses: some of them were not less than twenty years in learning the rudiments of Druidical learning; nor did they esteem it lawful to commit it to writing, though on other occasions they used the *Greek* letters¹. The influence of the Bards was considerable among the Celtic nations; and, we learn from the *Odyssæ*, that Agamemnon consigned his queen to the care of a Bard. It is probable, indeed, that among the Greeks, as well as among the Northern nations, they were the principal ministers of religion.

In the course of this Essay, the progress of arts and sciences has been generally noticed. It appears that the first essays in composition are war-songs and detached ballads, the music of which adds greatly to their popularity. The Bards, or Minstrels, were accustomed to perform

¹ Cæs. de Bell. Gall. l. vi. c. 14.

at all the festivals or assemblies of the people, whether civil or religious. The composition sometimes admitted of a kind of dialogue, in which two or more interlocutors were introduced. The singers personated either two champions before they engage in battle, or the departing lover taking leave of his mistress: and thus is laid the foundation of DRAMATIC EXHIBITIONS. That the Greek Drama commenced in this manner, we have undoubted testimonies. "It was originally nothing more than a rude song, exhibited by one or more clownish minstrels or ballad-singers, who disfigured themselves to excite attention. *Thespis* collected a company of them together, and transported them from village to village in a kind of waggon; and something like this state of the drama we see in the rude exhibitions of *mummers* and *morrice-dancers* in the inland parts of this kingdom. *Thespis* added to the singers an interlocutor, who served to explain the matter of the songs; and in this state the Drama continued, till an accident brought it to greater perfection. In the representation of a Tragedy, in which the Furies were exhibited, the barbarous dresses of the chorus (which consisted of fifty persons) frightened the pregnant women into fits. Hence *Æschylus* was induced to retrench the number of the chorus,

rus, and to make up for the deficiency, added to the actors or interlocutors. He erected a stage, and ornamented it with machinery; and equipped the actors with the robe, the buskin, and the mask¹. The first players, that were introduced into Rome, came from Etruria, and danced a rude country dance, the young men breaking jests upon each other in an incorrect species of poetry². One Livius was the first who went through a regular play, or dramatic narrative, which he acted himself; but straining his voice, he procured a boy to sing to him, while he only acted³. In the last voyage of Captain Cook, we have a very minute description of an entertainment exhibited at the Friendly Isles, which exactly agrees with this account of the historian⁴: and the customs of an English audience, even in the time of Shakespear, who amused themselves before the play with drinking, smoking, and playing at cards⁵, have an evident connection with the origin of those exhibitions, and prove

¹ Lectures on the sacred Poetry of the Hebrews, translated from the Latin of the Right Rev. R. Lowth, Lord Bishop of London. v. ii. p. 290.

² Liv. Dec. i. l. 7.

³ Ib.

⁴ Cook's last voyage, V. i. p. 254.

⁵ Malone's Supp. to the Works of Shakespear.

them

them to have been an occasional entertainment during the intervals of a wake or festival.

There is no branch of literature which so generally promotes civilization and science as the Drama. By exciting the admiration of the populace, it, in a manner, allures them to improvement : by cherishing the sympathetic feelings, it incites to patriotism and the heroic virtues. It refines the language of a nation ; it develops the diversities of the human character, and in general disposes to the acquisition of knowledge.

The public transactions of most nations are at first preserved in the poetical panegyrics and other compositions of the bards ; and, as letters are cultivated, these give place to more regular HISTORIES.

The desire of excelling in ORATORY is another cause which promoted the cultivation of science. The interests of men will always engage them to employ as much of the arts of persuasion as their abilities will permit. The study of the rhetorical arts will necessarily engage men in the cultivation of other sciences, particularly the moral and political ; since the most profuse ornaments of speech are ineffectual, unless there be some ground of matter and argument.

Curiosity

Curiosity and the desire of divining future events has been a further cause of the promotion of science, and particularly the science of nature, and of the heavenly bodies.

A polished age is not the age of POETRY. That wildness of manners, which constitutes the beauty of heroic, and even of pastoral poetry, is no longer to be found. There is no modern fiction which abounds so much in beauties of this cast, as the real description of John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness. In a refined and scientific age, the machinery which animates and which elevates poetry, is no longer held in respect; and men must write coldly, where they have no veneration for the object. In fine, the exercise of the judgment damps the imagination; an attention to critical rules chills the divine ecstasy; and a variety of objects diverts the attention. The passion of superstitious fear is little exercised; we do not look with surprize on every natural phenomenon; this source of the sublime is, therefore, almost totally annihilated. It was different when religious enthusiasm was united with the poetical; when the solitary bard wandered over some uncultivated melancholy scene, where the mark of no human footstep was to be found; when every sound seemed pregnant with danger, and when every object inspired him with
awe;

awe; when good and evil Genii were supposed to inhabit every river, every mountain, every tree; his memory charged with tremendous tales of apparitions, his fancy wantoning in romantic ideas of men and things. In such a state, the imagination is of necessity more active than that of the frigid reasoner, who goes to work mechanically, examines precedents with the accuracy of a lawyer, reads critics, weighs every word and sentence, writes upon subjects in which he has no faith, and pictures scenes which he never beheld.

The period of society which precedes that we are now treating of, is the *pastoral* state. Men are always inclined to extol the manners of their youthful days; the pastoral life, therefore, forms the ground-work of most of their poetical performances. Hence are derived the splendid fictions of the Golden, the Saturnian Age; the happiness and equality of which are extolled with an enthusiastic fervour. Didactic and moral poetry is reserved for a more advanced stage of refinement. In the age of Queen Elizabeth, the excellent author of the History of English Poetry remarks, there were but few satirists: too high a relish prevailed for the glowing pictures of the imagination; and the minds of men were scarcely cultivated enough to penetrate the minutiae
of

of character, and the springs of human conduct.

MORAL LEARNING was, however, early admired in Greece, and their poets and orators do not fail to introduce it on most occasions. Pindar interweaves many abstract sentiments in his delightful Odes; and Homer is not destitute of them. The speeches of ambassadors often conclude with a moral reflection¹; whence the taste of reducing knowledge to general maxims seems to have originated.

PHILOSOPHY first appeared in the little sententious proverbs and maxims of the early ages; and, in all probability, natural as well as moral knowledge was inculcated in nearly the same form². Socrates arose, a man of singular ingenuity, and fond of disputation: he turned the attention of men to the investigation of causes, and taught them the art of analogical reasoning. Under Plato, the refinements of reason ran into excess, and logic was involved in subtilty. It appears to have been the opinion of Plato, that the human mind is capable of any research, and

¹ Herod, l. vii. passim: see particularly c. 157. Thucydides, passim.

² All the elements of Grecian science were deduced ultimately from the East; and may, I think, be traced to a sacred source. N.

that there is nothing in nature which we may not at one time or other hope to comprehend. Aristotle, a more regular and systematic genius, followed; and he seems to have employed himself rather in methodizing the science which was diffused among mankind, than in inventing new. The disciples of Socrates divided into two principal branches; the one following Plato, the other Antisthenes. From Plato sprung the Academics and the Peripatetics; from Antisthenes was derived, says Laertius, the apathy of Diogenes, the continence of Crates, and the patience and fortitude of Zeno¹.

It would be impossible to continue a general history of mankind further than what I call the Fourth Period of Society. Till then, there is an uniformity in manners, which enables us to mark with precision the progress of civilization. After that period, the variety of casual inventions, which serve to form what is termed *national* character, renders the investigation difficult.

From different causes, men halt in different stages of civilization. They continue longer in the *hunter* (or *second*) *state*, in cold than in hot climates: the latter are favourable to agricul-

¹ Diog. Laert. Ant. 374.

ture ; and the temperate climates seem to dispose to the pastoral life. Civilization is often hastened by causes equally adventitious. A great genius arising, gives the tone to his contemporaries. Civil commotions promote activity. But, on the whole, the advances of reason are gradual and slow¹.

¹ As a corollary from the preceding Essay, it seems to follow, that improper means have usually been employed for the civilization of barbarous nations. Missionaries have been sent among them, and schools have been erected for their instruction, without effect. They are found incapable of receiving abstract ideas, or attending to any chain of reasoning on moral or religious topics. It is to little purpose to give a literary education to a few of the children of savages, since it only serves to render them different from the rest of the community, and unfit for that stage of society in which they are engaged. A nation, it appears, must arrive at knowledge and civilization by proper gradations. The first application of which the mind seems capable, in a rude state, is to the mechanic arts. The introduction of these among uncivilized people will excite their curiosity and their emulation ; and the conveniencies procured by means of these arts will always be a sufficient recommendation of them. If, therefore, it be the object of any government, or public institution, to civilize and instruct a barbarous nation, let it not attempt to make divines and philosophers of the younger savages ; let them be made carpenters, smiths, boat-builders, wheel-wrights, &c. and let the females be taught to spin and to weave. The introduction

duction of these arts will render the society stationary, and an application to agriculture will succeed.

It is a fact, I believe, now generally allowed, that Christianity can only be received by people whose minds are disciplined, and capable of more continued attention than savages generally are. It is found by experience too, that the most successful teachers of Christianity among rude nations, are the enthusiastic and popular. The oratory which is calculated to make an impression upon them, is inconsistent with taste and science; nor are their minds sufficiently stayed and sedate for the cool regularity of established worship.

E S S A Y II.

OF THE INFLUENCE OF PHYSICAL AND MORAL CAUSES ON THE HUMAN MIND.

Theory of a celebrated French Writer, and his Followers.—Arguments in Support of that Theory.—Arguments on the other Side.—Occasional Effects not sufficient Foundation for a general Doctrine.—Accommodating Power in the Human System.—The Effects of Climate counteracted in civilized Countries.—The Mind chiefly governed by intellectual Causes.—Mr. Hume's Arguments considered.—Other Principles to account for national Character.—Situation.—Local Arts.—Casualties.—Commerce.—Government.

I. **A**N author, who, in my opinion, is more indebted for his reputation to his ingenuity than his judgment, has attempted to deduce the laws, customs, and government of nations from the physical influence of climate, situation, and soil¹. The theory was too well adapted

¹ Vide L'Esprit de Loix, passim.—Lord Kaimes has been very successful in producing facts to overturn the doctrine of Montesquieu, respecting the influence of climate; but his Lordship is not equally happy in the theory which he adopts,

adapted to the genius of his country not to be implicitly followed; and, in its support, the advocates for materialism among ourselves have lately favoured us with some ponderous volumes.

The arguments for this hypothesis are chiefly drawn from the apparent effects of climate, atmosphere, and food, upon the individual. Cold, say these authors, contracts the fibres, renders them rigid, and diminishes their sensibility; heat, on the contrary, relaxes and debilitates, discolours the skin, renders the body tender and obnoxious to disease. On sudden transitions from heat to cold, or from cold to heat, we experience something like these effects extended to the mind. A moist or dry atmosphere has a sensible effect upon the spirits; and the alterations produced by these in our bodily health, may contribute still further to their influence upon the intellectual faculties. The effects of diet, they add, are considerable. Not only gluttony and intemperance blunt the understanding, and destroy the finer feelings, but particular kinds of food, taken even in moderation, are said to produce this effect more than

adopts, to account for national character.—See Sketches of Man, B. i. f. 1.

others. It has been asserted, that those who subsist on flesh are commonly ferocious and cruel; and that those, on the contrary, whose chief support is vegetables, are of milder and less warlike dispositions¹.

Notwithstanding these specious arguments, there are some reasons which incline me to question the influence of physical causes upon the human mind; and to believe it, on the whole, a very uncertain criterion of national character.

First. It is very little understood, how far the mind is connected with the body, and dependant on it. It is certain that pain distracts the attention, and sickness enfeebles the understanding; but we are hardly justified in affirming, that imbecillity of mind is the natural concomitant of a relaxed or weak habit of body. Some of the strongest minds have existed in very frail bodies; nay, under the immediate oppression of sickness, pain, and infirmity²: on the other hand, it is not at all uncommon to meet with idiots of a sound and healthy constitution.

¹ Such was the opinion of the ingenious, but fantastical Rousseau.—See Emille, &c.

² I need only mention Mr. Pope, Lord Shaftsbury, and Scarron.

Perhaps

Perhaps what we experience on transitions from cold to heat, may be the effect only of a temporary fever; and as soon as recovered from the first shock, which the mind, from its union with the senses, receives by such disorder in the external frame, it will exert its usual faculties, whatever may continue to be the state of the atmosphere. On the same principles, the effects of excess in eating and drinking may be accounted for, being attended with a species of fever. But, that particular kinds of food have any power or influence over the mind, further than the moral consequences attending an increase of bodily health, is utterly destitute of proof; and is contradicted by so many facts, that there is reason to believe the hypothesis founded only on a fantastical analogy.

Secondly. If it were granted, that the mind is in many respects dependant on the body; yet the latter is endued with an *accommodating* power, and has a disposition to retain its natural temperament in all climates¹. I apprehend there are no proofs, that, while the body continues in health, the mind can be physically injured; now, health and vigour are enjoyed in almost all climates, though it requires some time to

¹ See Experiments in a heated room.—Phil. Trans.

season and habituate the body to a different climate.

Thirdly. The difference of climate could only affect *savage* nations ; for its effects among polished nations may be, and generally are, counteracted. There are means of preserving the body temperate in hot countries ; and a cooling regimen, more fruit and vegetables, are made use of there, and less of intoxicating or strong liquors, than in those regions that approach nearer to the poles. I speak of countries that have been long inhabited by the same race of people : our colonies abroad are not fair examples, they being too lately settled to desert the manners of the parent country. On the other hand, in cold climates, the use of fire, and warm cloathing, are substitutes for a dry atmosphere and a genial sun. Thus an inhabitant of Britain may live as luxuriously in his own country, as at Constantinople or Bengal.

Fourthly. The physical principles that have been enumerated, can only be considered as *pre-disposing causes* at most. They cannot give ideas ; now ideas are, as it were, the parents of each other. All our reasoning consists in comparing, all our fancy, in combining, ideas. The most potent of the passions, avarice and ambition, depend

depend on these combinations of ideas¹, and these are directed by education and fashion. Physical causes, on this account, can have little effect on the manners and customs; they can only reduce the mind to a state more proper for receiving certain ideas than others: but the first inventions, and first principles of science introduced into a nation, however introduced, will in reality influence the national genius.

Mr. *Hume* has very accurately enumerated several striking instances, in contradiction to the theory of *Montesquieu* and his disciples. Thus he observes, that an uniformity of manners prevails throughout the whole empire of China, though the climate varies considerably; while the laws and manners of small states bordering on each other materially differ. The slavery of the female sex is the same in Russia, as in the warmer climates of Asia; only differing, as moulded by the different religions of *Mohammedanism* and *Christianity*. Those customs, which are adopted through extensive tracts of territory, seem evidently to have been borrowed by the people of those territories from one another. An argument not less decisive is, that remarkable differences in manners subsist among people who live toge-

¹ See Prelim. Dissert. prefixed to King's Origin of Evil.

ther, but whose peculiar laws and customs prohibit intimate connections: this is exemplified in the difference between the *Turks* and the native *Greeks*, who live under their government. The *Jews* are uniformly the same, wherever they are scattered. A child, if taken away from his parents, will have nothing of the peculiar temper of his countrymen. A *Janizary* is the same, whether his native country be Greece or Arabia: and hence arise professional characters.

Were national genius and manners dependant on physical principles, as long as the food and climate continued the same, we should expect the inhabitants would retain the same dispositions: yet we observe, that very sudden revolutions in government will produce a total change in manners; and those people who retain their ancient civil constitution are seldom altered by *transplantation*. The oldest colonies in America retain their primitive manners. The *Canadian* and the *Bostonian* were, at the peace of 1763, as different as at the first peopling of those countries. What relation, what likeness have the modern *Greeks* to their free and polished ancestors? Do the modern *Italians* in the least resemble the brave and high-spirited Romans? Where are the ferocious Lombards? Where are the Gauls, the Franks, the conquerors of Rome?

Rome?—Not among the *petit maitres* of Paris. How different have been the manners of Britain before and after the conquest by the Romans, before and after the Saxon invasion, and the Norman establishment?—Examine the history of most nations, and you will find similar revolutions.

II. We must look then for a solution of the phenomena of national character upon other principles. And First, I will not deny all manner of influence to *soil* and *climate*; but that influence, I assert, is only exerted through the medium of a *moral* cause. A fruitful country will certainly promote indolence and luxury, but it is, because little labour or exertion is required to procure a subsistence; and these, I grant, will often terminate in arbitrary government. In like manner a sterile, inhospitable country will inure its inhabitants to industry and hardships, and will also excite a spirit of emigration and commerce. Yet, with respect to the cultivation of the mind, there are advantages peculiar to each situation. If the leisure, which a fertile country and a mild climate afford, be favourable to curiosity and contemplation, the sterility of colder regions calls forth the exertions of ingenuity, and rouses to action all the mental powers.

Secondly.

Secondly. *Situation* will have effect in the early stages of society. A vicinity to the sea inclines the inhabitants to be commercial, hospitable, and of course in some degree refined. In inland situations, the people are commonly of jealous and avaricious dispositions; the natural effect of the labour and difficulty with which they acquire their subsistence in the employments of agriculture. The Germans, from their mediate situation, are frequently at war; they will therefore, in all probability, ever remain a nation of hardy soldiers: and the want of commerce (which employs superfluous hands, or those not wanted in agriculture, and also introduces the luxury of other countries) will contribute to this effect. A hilly, romantic country, and long summer, will dispose to the pastoral life: long nights, and confinement, will invite to study and meditation.

Local circumstances will also affect the *arts*. The Oriental architecture (improperly called the Gothic) is uniformly the same, and imitates the ramifications of trees, because the countries where it was invented abounded in wood. The Egyptian is of a more solid kind, because there is little wood in Egypt; and all the first buildings of that country were of stone. The passion for building arose to an astonishing excess in
Egypt,

Egypt, from the excellence of their quarries. King Cheops prostituted his daughter for hire, that he might build a pyramid ; she afterwards acquired sufficient wealth by her practice to build one herself¹.

Thirdly. Those events which we call *casual*, independent of physical causes, give birth to the peculiar laws and political establishments of most nations. The laws and customs have frequently no better source than the caprice of the first settlers ; or they are diversified by another nation which breaks in upon them, and produces a new arrangement in the civil constitution. A man of genius starts up, and acquires sufficient authority to reform it ; and this is often done in conformity with his particular prejudices. Athens and Lacedæmon were governed by very different institutions, though bordering upon each other. What relation had the laws of Lycurgus to the soil or climate ?

Fourthly. The introduction of particular *arts* and *sciences* must have considerable effects in forming the national manners, and in directing the popular passions and pursuits. This too will depend much on accident. A great genius arising in favourable circumstances, the peculiar

¹ Herod. l. ii. c. 126.

bent of his mind will have considerable weight in determining that of his countrymen, who will first copy him, and afterwards copy one another. Thus most nations have a manner in science as well as in dress.

Fifthly. It was before intimated that *commerce* and arts bring the people of different climates more upon a level : I will add, that moral causes often produce physical effects. Improvements in mechanics lessen labour, perhaps contribute to enervate the industrious inventors, and in time produce indolence and luxury.

Sixthly. The genius of the *government*, which we have seen will most commonly depend upon what is termed accident, is universally confessed to influence, more than any cause whatever, the manners of a people. The republican form is favourable to the cultivation of oratory, politics, and philosophy. A warlike nation will delight in shews, pompous exhibitions, and theatrical representations¹. The nations of India, who languish under the most despotic government, are remarked for being the most cowardly in the world. The Indian has nothing that

¹ We learn from Cicero's oration *pro Murena*, that candidates for public offices were generally successful in proportion to the magnificence of the shews which they exhibited.

he can call his own : his field, his flock, his treasure, his family, his life, are subject to a momentary summons ; and he must surrender them to the first imperious servant of his sovereign who pleases to demand them. An habitual *carelessness* and *levity* are the consequences of this impermanent condition ; his passions have no opportunity to mature and invigorate ; he dares set his heart on nothing : and courage is the result of some violent affection, which impels us to think an object worth contending for at the risk of other enjoyments. The man who has no strong propensities, no violent attachments, will never endanger his person : there must be a motive, there must be an object ; that object may indeed be imaginary, and in that consists the enthusiasm of courage. Every philosopher knows how habits are induced, and how prejudices are increased, by imitation : if on one or two occasions a man has been led to a disregard of life, or an insensibility of pain, his resolution will return, even when the motive is less weighty. The natural, or rather habitual courage of the English has been extolled above that of the French, and not without good foundation, if we consider the nature of the different governments. The levity of the latter nation may have resulted from the state of vassalage in which they
were

were immersed for many ages, and which they only changed for despotism. The gravity and strong passions of the Spaniards may be a relic of that free constitution which they not long since enjoyed, heightened by the noble enthusiasm, which animated them in their contests with the Moors. Customs or fashions of thinking, once established, are persevered in for some time after the causes have ceased to exist.

III. If the principal remarks contained in this Essay be admitted, it follows, that very little of manners, arts, and politeness depends upon the action of the elements, or the productions of the soil: and the reason will be clear, why all civilized nations are so nearly on an equality. If, further, natural causes may be so strongly counteracted by moral ones—if an inhabitant of Britain has no longer the same *senses* as at the time of the invasion of Julius Cæsar, but is transformed from a naked, hardy savage, fortified by nature or use against all extremities of weather, to an effeminate native of a warmer region; and may by art acquire the same delicacy of constitution, and of consequence the same vivacity of spirit—it follows, that prudent laws, and proper attention in the governing powers, may mould the manners of nations almost into what form they please. It follows, in fine, that, con-

scious how much of improvement and virtue is in our own power, we ought not to be disheartened by visionary theories; but, whatever the climate and situation, labour to approach that perfection, to which, whether attainable or not, it is our duty and happiness to aspire.

ESSAY

E S S A Y III.

A CONCISE VIEW OF THE HISTORY OF THE
FIRST AGES, WITH SOME OBSERVATIONS
ON THE DISPERSION OF KNOWLEDGE.

Connexion of this Essay with the preceding and following Essays.
—Antediluvian World.—Proofs of Deluge.—First Arts.—
Emigrations and first Colonies.—First Monarchies.—Progress
of Knowledge.—Chaldeans.—Egypt.—Greece.

WHEN we consider the extreme incapacity of mankind, before the invention of letters, and the impossibility of retaining facts with any degree of precision, instead of being surprised that the history of the first ages of the world are involved in darkness and confusion, we have some cause to wonder, that even a few rays of truth should have penetrated this immense cloud of ignorance, and descended to the present times. To the sacred history, I acknowledge, we are indebted for all the certainty we possess upon these subjects; and, without this unerring clue, we should, perhaps, be left to wander through the wilderness of poetic fiction and absurdity, without perceiving whither our researches tended.

The

The heathen writers are not, however, to be disregarded; some of them are valuable coadjutors to the sacred historians, and, by remarking nicely the connection, we are able to throw some excellent lights upon those parts of the description, which the brevity of the inspired penmen has necessarily thrown into shade.

If the system which is exhibited in the preceding Essay on the Progress of Manners and Society, will not meet with confirmation from a review of the actual history of the world, it is undeserving the attention of the public. To render it really acceptable and useful, it appeared necessary to authenticate it by such testimonies as have been generally admitted by the learned; and to prove that I have not wandered in the regions of speculation, but have drawn my observations from the practice of mankind.

The Essays also, which immediately follow, will receive some elucidation, as well as confirmation, from a concise view of the first pages of history: the history of superstition in particular is so nearly connected with the history of the world, that, to understand the one, it is necessary continually to have recourse to the other.

I flatter myself, that the fastidious delicacy of our modern self-created philosophers will not exact from me the unreasonable compliment of de-

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priving

priving myself of some of the best resources in this difficult research, merely because they do not chuse to acknowledge the scriptures. To tread in the footsteps of a Raleigh, a Stillingfleet, a Newton, and a Bryant, may appear in their eyes weakness and superstition; in the eyes of those who are so unfashionable as to retain a respect for that obsolete accomplishment, ancient literature, these authorities will not appear much less respectable than those which have graced the annals of infidelity. Let me, however, assure them, that I am uninfluenced by names, perhaps more uninfluenced than themselves; I pursue this system, because no other system has ever been presented to us: nor has the prolific fancy of modern adventurers, unrestrained by the fetters of learning, been ever able to devise a conjecture on these subjects, that deserves for a moment the attention of a reflecting being.

In the Essay to which I have just had occasion to refer, I intimated my assent to that system of cosmogony which derives the human race from one original stock¹. The wonderful analogy between the languages of different countries; the order of the alphabet being nearly alike in every part, where the use of letters has been

¹ Ess. i, p. 2.

known;

known; the astonishing conformity in the ancient traditions of all nations; and, above all, the concurring testimony of poets and historians, appear to me irresistible arguments. It is moreover confessed by all parties, that science originally proceeded from the East. Those who were the immediate disciples of the Oriental nations improved in arts and civilization, while the rest of the world remained immersed in barbarism and ignorance. This is a circumstance not to be accounted for from climate, since genius has been found to exist in all climates; and since that of the East, according to the theorists whom I am now opposing, is such as naturally disposes to indolence rather than to activity: it is, in truth, a circumstance only to be explained by an hypothesis, grounded on the truth of the scripture history, and which, in the succeeding pages, I shall endeavour to substantiate.

Of the antediluvian world too little is known to render it a fair object of philosophical inquiry. It appears, that the portion of the earth which was during that period inhabited, was extremely populous, extremely wicked, and extremely ignorant. Their ignorance is evident, since the simple art of constructing a vessel to sail upon the water was utterly unknown.

That the habitable world at least was de-

stroyed by a deluge, is another point in which the traditions of every nation under heaven agree. The story of Deucalion corresponds in so many particulars with the Mosaic account, that it is impossible to doubt their having originated from one source. The celebrated Chaldean antiquary Berosus has left sufficient behind him to satisfy us that such was the prevailing belief of his country. The Chinese, the Indians, the Egyptians¹, even the savages of America, are said to have a similar tradition². Besides these testimonies, one of the most learned writers of our time³ has traced a variety of the rites and ceremonies of the ancients into memorials of this important fact, and has grounded

¹ "The sacred Ogdoas, in Egypt, consisted of eight personages described in a boat, who were esteemed the most ancient gods of that country." *Bryant. Myth.* v. iii. p. 9.

² See STILLINGF. *Orig. Sac.* b. iii. c. 4. RALEIGH'S *Hist. World*, c. vii. f. 1.

³ Mr. BRYANT. See *An Analysis of Ancient Mythology*. I cannot in common gratitude omit this opportunity of recommending to my readers this great work, a work better calculated to overturn and eradicate the principles of infidelity, than half the books which have been published on religious subjects. One of the most dangerous causes of scepticism is reflecting on the absurd systems of religion that have been popular in the world. Mr. Bryant demonstrates how and wherefore these systems have been popular.

his arguments upon convincing proofs from the most respectable authors of Greece ¹.

Some very learned writers have denied that there is any decisive reason from scripture ² for supposing the flood recorded in Genesis to be any other than a partial inundation, sufficient to cover that part of the world which was then inhabited. The difficulties suggested by infidel writers against this part of sacred history are not indeed deserving of much attention ; but if this supposition be granted, they will be considerably diminished. One of the most popular of their objections in particular lies against the

¹ Independent of the agreement which we find in ancient writers concerning the circumstances of these great facts, I think the ideas themselves are not very likely to strike people in a very rude state of society. The notion of a chaos, of a deluge, and of the whole human race proceeding from a single stock, are not very obvious to ignorant minds. The supposition of the earth's having existed from eternity is much easier than any of these. Again, to argue that these narratives were invented by designing impostors would surely be still more absurd ; since it is impossible to see any end they could answer in this view. In short, the general belief of these facts can only be accounted for by supposing them really to have happened, but to be in some respects misrepresented and disguised in the different traditions.

² There are innumerable instances in scripture, where the word *aretz* (earth) means only a particular territory. It is surely no strained construction then to limit it to the whole of the inhabited part of the globe.

probability of the ark being able to contain such a number of creatures as would be necessary for the propagation of the different species of animals: but this will appear to have little weight, if we admit the supposition that the ark really did contain only those creatures which were immediately useful, and which the patriarch might find necessary for his support or convenience, after the subsiding of the waters ¹.

We are informed that the ark rested on a mountain of the name of Ararat ², in the province of Armenia, a situation, from its fertility and temperate climate, admirably calculated to promote the re-peopling of the world. It is remarkable that Homer, and some other of the ancient authors, should positively allude to the dividing of the earth among three persons, the three sons of Cronus ³, who is by a multitude of concurring testimonies proved to be no other than the patriarch Noah ⁴.

In this favourable situation the posterity of Noah presently multiplied. Whatever arts were

¹ Stillingsfleet, after Sir W. Raleigh, calculates that the whole capacity of the ark was 450 cubical perches.

² Derived from *bar* (mountain) and *irad* or *irat* (to descend).

³ Iliad O. v. 187. Callim. Hymn. in Jovem, quoted by Bryant.

⁴ See Bryant's Myth.

known previous to the deluge, we may easily conceive were speedily revived; that these, however, were few, I am much inclined to believe, since the useful arts are seldom totally lost. From unfavourable circumstances, from a sterile soil, an inhospitable climate, and the difficulty of procuring food, a race of men may indeed lose whatever speculative knowledge they were originally in possession of; they may even forget those arts, which they have no opportunity of practising: a colony, for instance, transported from the sea-coast to an inland country, would probably lose the knowledge of navigation; but there are some arts of a general nature, which can never be totally lost, if once they have been perfectly acquired.

On the first creation of man, *the Lord put him into the garden of Eden* (or pleasantness) *to dress and to keep it*; since however we have reason to believe, from the succeeding chapter, that the earth was at that period in so fertile a state, that it spontaneously brought forth every thing necessary for the support of human nature, little art could be required for the keeping of it in order. We are afterwards informed, that *Cain was a tiller of the ground*, but of the nature of such an employment at that period we are totally ignorant; it is probable it consisted in little else than in preserv-

ing the fruit-trees and herbage free from weeds, and collecting the fruits which that delightful climate almost spontaneously afforded. Of the other arts which were in use before the flood, there is also a brief enumeration in the fourth chapter of Genesis. We find that mankind, at that time, chiefly *dwelt in tents*, and that their employment consisted in the care of *cattle*. The use of metals was certainly known; but this seems to be a local art, and one of those which might be lost by different colonies, unfavourably situated for procuring the materials. Music was not unknown to the Antediluvians; but it is an art which is practised in some rude manner by almost every race of men, even in the lowest stages of society. After the flood, Noah is spoken of as *beginning to be an husbandman*; and though the training of vines was one of the most obvious arts, the first vineyard upon record was of his planting. But, in fact, it is evident, that in much later times men did not apply to agriculture; and there is great reason to believe, that little or nothing was known of the art till the time even of the first Hebrew patriarchs. With regard to any moral or religious knowledge, the human race were at that period in a still more uninformed state. God had indeed, probably by vision, communicated with Noah; but no code
of

of faith or religious worship had been delivered to mankind; and without some system the notions of men become easily perverted. Thus we have reason to believe, that mankind, at the period when they began to separate, were in an extremely rude state, without letters, without arts, without a settled system of religion, and possessed of scarcely any rudiments of knowledge, which might not easily be obliterated by unfavourable circumstances.

The scripture genealogies are recorded with so much accuracy, that if the history rested upon no higher authority than those of the heathens, it would still challenge our attention, for its correctness, consistency, and probability. By these we find, that the progeny of Noah increased with that rapidity, which might be expected in a favourable situation. Destitute of arts, however, as we have reason to believe them, they would necessarily disperse more rapidly than a polished society, united by laws and customs, by ambition and by fear. Where the principal support of men is the spontaneous fruits of the earth, the produce of their agility in hunting, or the few animals which in that state they would be able to domesticate, a wide range of country is necessary to the support of even a very small society. They therefore began soon to disperse; and, as
there

there was no temptation to induce to war, and no necessity for any precaution or defence but what was sufficient to preserve them from the attacks of wild beasts, they probably separated at first in very small companies, and some of the more adventurous might even wander so far as totally to disjoin themselves from the society of their brethren.

Some of the families thus dispersed continued many ages in ignorance and barbarism; and others began early to perform a conspicuous part in the great historical drama.

One of the first, and it appears the most powerful, of these early colonies, was that of the family of Cush, under the conduct of Nimrod, the third from Noah. This adventurous band left the mountainous regions of Ararat, and took an immense circuit southward, before they could satisfy themselves in their choice of an habitation¹. Nimrod is the first person upon record, after the flood, who founded a city; and that city, Babel or Babylon, became the capital of the first great empire in the world. I see little ground for the opinion of some critics, who suppose that the character of Nimrod, a *mighty hunter*, properly signifies a mighty warrior, since, in reality, we

¹ This fact is confirmed by the ancient historian Berosus.
EUSEB. *Chron.*

meet with no mention whatever of wars in that period of society.

It is not perfectly clear from scripture, whether Ashur, the son of Shem, had accompanied this colony, or whether he had previously possessed himself of the land of Shinar, and was driven out by Nimrod and the Cushites or Cuthites. We are only informed, that soon after the founding of Babel by the sons of Cush, a colony under Ashur proceeded northward along the Tigris, and at some distance from Babel laid the foundations of Nineveh.

The passion for emigration, it appears, became so prevalent, that the leaders of these adventurers found it necessary to employ some device, in order to retain the society stationary, and subject to their command: *and they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven (or the atmosphere); and let us make us a name (or a monument, i. e. a landmark), lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.* This design, however, was contrary to the order of Providence, who had predetermined that the *earth* should be *replenished*. A close, compact, and numerous society, at that early and uncivilized period, could have produced only distraction and vice, such as existed previous to the flood; the interests of virtue, and their own interests, required

quired a further dispersion. The mode by which this dispersion was effected, was by producing such a temporary confusion in their speech, or rather utterance¹, that dissensions arose among them; they ceased from their ambitious design, and a considerable part of them betook themselves again to that wandering life they had so lately relinquished.

This state of facts meets with the strongest confirmation from the Gentile historians. Strabo speaks of an immense tower, which remained till a very late period, in the city of Babylon². All the ancient writers, and Justin in particular, assert the Babylonish to have been the first empire. Nebroth or Nimrod is referred to by many of the Oriental writers, who represent him as a giant, and affirm, that after his death he was deified, and called Orion³. To this transaction at Babel the story of the Titanic war is supposed, with the utmost probability, to refer⁴; and under the fabled accounts of the retreat of Bacchus is aptly represented the dispersion and wanderings of these first fathers of nations⁵.

¹ See the first pages of the Essay on Language.

² L. 16.

³ See a variety of indubitable authorities quoted by Mr. BRYANT, *Myth.* viii. p. 36 and 38.

⁴ Ib. 48.

⁵ Ib. 40.

The second son of Ham, Mizraim, extended his travels still further, and settled his family in Egypt, which for many ages was called after his name. Plutarch also informs us, from the Egyptian antiquities, that one of the most ancient names of Egypt was *Chemia*, or *Chamia*, undoubtedly from Ham (or Cham) their great progenitor¹. It is unnecessary on this occasion to pursue any further these early adventurers. It would be superfluous to describe the settlements of the Canaanites, the Elamites, &c. The family of Arphaxad, whether from the circumstance of being descended from the eldest branch of Noah, or whether from not being so numerous or so enterprizing as the other families, seem for some ages to have fixed their abode nearer to the original station than the other descendants of the patriarch. This family appears to have existed in a style of uniform simplicity and virtue to the very last of the Hebrew patriarchs.

In answer to whatever objections may be alleged against the probability of such immense emigrations taking place at so early a period, I will venture to observe, that a very rude state of society is the most favourable to emigration. Persons who have once experienced the comforts

¹ PLUT. de *Isid.* & *Osir.*

of civilized life, will not very easily be induced to relinquish them. Ignorance is the parent of that unreflecting kind of courage which urges men to desperate undertakings : besides, that the actual want of the necessaries of life will generally impel them to these daring attempts. Let any man compare these early emigrations with those of the Goths and other northern barbarians, and they will not, I will venture to affirm, appear out of the course of nature.

The history of the progress of knowledge corresponds with this account of the progress of society. It is universally agreed, that all science originated from the East. The great principles of knowledge, indeed, appear to be such as could only be imparted by a divine revelation ; of these the first rudiments were dispensed to the first patriarchs, to Adam and to Noah. The Chaldeans became a learned people, not only from the advantages they possessed of being soon settled, and becoming numerous and powerful, which enabled them to cultivate whatever seeds of knowledge they had received from their ancestors ; but from their vicinity to that country, which was the seat of successive revelations, and from their easy communication with that people, which was the object of them.

Of

● Of the Egyptians little is known previous to the establishment of the Israelites among them. I have already remarked, that the human mind is slow in proceeding to new inventions, but knowledge is a plant of rapid growth and improvement. The Egyptians, by the settlement of the Israelites among them, in addition to that stock of knowledge which their ancestors had brought with them into the country, became possessed of all the religious and political notions which the Hebrew patriarchs had either imbibed from the first great source, or had acquired by their own reflection and experience. We have reason to believe that the Egyptians did not fail to profit by these advantages: they are generally represented as a wise and learned people; their arts have polished, their fables delighted, and their philosophy improved the fathers of European literature.

With respect to the other tribes or colonies, the state of knowledge among them must have resulted altogether from circumstances. It must have greatly depended on the period of their emigration; on the age, experience, and abilities of those chiefs or heads of families under whom they adventured; on the nature of the country where they settled; on the growth of their society; and on their communication with those

nations who were possessed of superior sources of knowledge. Some of them, doubtless, on their first settlement, found themselves under the pressure of immediate necessity, and were too much occupied with procuring a subsistence, even to attend to those rudiments of knowledge which they originally possessed; others lived in a scattered and divided state, and it was long before they formed themselves into such societies as rendered the cultivation of knowledge either necessary or practicable. These considerations, if extended a little, will easily enable us to account for the multitudes who have remained for a series of time in the inferior stages of civilization.

All human science and improvement is a species of intellectual traffic; those nations, as well as those individuals, who trade the most extensively, will generally accumulate the largest gains. The situation of Greece, almost surrounded by those countries which were first enlightened by the sun of knowledge; the enterprising disposition of its inhabitants, who were early addicted to travel and adventure; and the freedom of its government, which laid speculation under no restraints religious or civil, soon enabled it to become the emporium of arts and literature. The science and theology of the Greeks, however, clearly indicated the heterogeneous materials of
which

which it was composed. It resembles that species of marble which is compounded of a variety of minerals; the utility of which bears no proportion to its beauty. In their mythology particularly, we see a strange mixture of the mysticism of Egypt, with the bolder fictions of Persia, and the rude traditions of the barbarous islanders. From these scattered hints, the active and loquacious genius of Greece framed bulky systems and ingenious fables. Their history is of a similar kind: whatever eminent or curious was related of the heroes of other countries, Greece, without hesitation, transferred to her own; and, though later in civilization than many other nations, what she wanted in antiquity she determined to compensate in industry; she arrogantly assumed honours to which she had no right, while the manner in which she asserted them, and the proofs which she adduced, served only the more to betray her plagiarisms to posterity. Could we but reach the fountains where the Grecian muses first drank the waters of inspiration, I have no doubt but we should find them further distant than the Heliconian spring; this however is scarcely a subject of blame: what is genius, but the faculty of imbibing and improving facts and ideas, with which we are furnished by the experience of others? In practical morals and

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politics

politics I believe the Greeks have better claims to originality; their speculations on the latter subject, in particular, appear in a great measure the result of experiment and observation. It is however impossible to read the ethics of Plato, or even of Aristotle, and not to discover traces of foreign science. These authors are frequently mystical and visionary, and write in a style not at all consistent with the usual accuracy and clearness of their nation: in a word, they are sometimes engaged on topics which they do not understand; and we see them endeavouring to explain matters which have been but half explained to them, and which their masters, had they been to speak for themselves, would probably have placed in a very different light.

But if we cannot allow to the Greeks the praise of originality, we certainly cannot deny them that of ingenuity and taste. If they were not the fathers and inventors of science, they were certainly the first by whom it was adorned to advantage. All the knowledge which other nations possessed, was locked up in mysterious hieroglyphics, or disclosed in broken fragments and unconnected maxims. This mode of writing has even pervaded the Hebrew Scriptures; the brevity and sententiousness of which has caused much labour and perplexity to commen-

tators'. We are not to suppose that the Greeks arrived all at once to that degree of perfection, or that they did not even profit in this respect by the productions of others; but notwithstanding this, I believe the assertion will scarcely bear a controversy, that the Greeks are almost the first people who produced correct, connected, well-arranged compositions. They are, therefore, at least, our masters in style. The mode of writing which they introduced has been found both so perfectly agreeable and convenient, that it has been universally imitated throughout the civilized world. By their mistakes and caprices, by their national vanity, their eager credulity, and their love of fiction, they have probably misrepresented, defaced, and obscured much of the useful learning which they found in the world; on the other hand, they have, it must be confessed, rescued much of it from oblivion, which would never have been preserved but for the pleasing mode in which they have contrived to transmit it to posterity: they have adorned all subjects, they have improved many, they have perfected some. Even where they have not

* Not only the habits of the age, but the nature of a great part of the Hebrew writings, contributed to the adoption of this style. See Bishop Lowth's Lectures on the sacred Poetry of the Hebrews, v. i.

enlightened, they have always entertained : they have taught us some virtue, and much taste ; if they have misled us in speculation, they have instructed us in several of the most useful practical arts, and particularly in that of expressing ourselves with grace, nature, elegance, and correctness.

ESSAY

E S S A Y IV.

REMARKS ON THE HISTORY OF
SUPERSTITION.

Of Religious and Moral Prejudices in general.—Origin of Polytheism.—Origin of Idolatry.—Origin of Divination, &c.—Origin and History of Sacrifices.—Of Apparitions, and other Branches of Superstition.

WHETHER we consider it as matter of curiosity—as enlarging the boundaries of our discoveries in that interesting tract of science, which respects the mind of man—or of utility in displaying the absurd original of many prejudices not quite out of estimation among us, the history of the perversions of human reason is a subject every way deserving of philosophical investigation. A complete history would, in many views, be important; there is indeed some danger that it might prove too voluminous.

The most active pests of human nature have been *religious error* and *moral prejudice*. The designs of self-interest, and the ravages of ambition, may be repressed by conscience, may be

restrained by laws; their ill consequences may be sometimes prevented by circumspection and foresight, and, at all events, they are casual and momentary evils. The dominion of prejudice is more general, and its operation more certain. Men may repent of other vices, and seek no occasion to repeat them; but the understanding must undergo a kind of revolution, it must be untaught as well as re-taught, all the springs of error must be completely laid open, before he, who has imbibed a prejudice, can act like a rational creature, or a good member of society. The subject of moral, or rather civil prejudices, I must reserve for another Essay; and, for uniformity's sake, confine myself at present to a few remarks on the origin and consequences of certain *superstitious* notions.

The most remarkable circumstances in the history of superstition, are, 1. *polytheism*; 2. *idolatry*; 3. *divination*, and *ordeal trials*; 4. *sacrifices*; and, 5. the fabulous tales of *miraculous* and *terrific appearances*. These errors are all of them naturally connected; and the common sources of them are mistaken traditions, analogical reasoning, and an ignorance of natural causes.

I. With respect to polytheism, the exuberance of human folly and superstition has extended to innumerable ramifications; but it would be neither

ther useful nor convenient minutely to pursue all the meanders of absurdity through the different regions of barbarism. Such a history would be little more than a catalogue of names, or an uninteresting detail of correspondent rites. I shall therefore confine myself chiefly to that great system of superstition which prevailed in Greece and Rome : in this manner of treating the subject, however, I shall possess one manifest advantage, since, from the social nature of that religion which enabled them to incorporate with their own all the deities of other nations, a view of this mythology will almost afford a general view of all the different forms of superstition which were known in the civilized world before the birth of Christ.

The religion of Greece, even to the names of their gods, was confessedly of Oriental, or at least of Egyptian origin ; it is therefore easy to conceive, that many of their theological notions must have been ultimately derived from the doctrines, the ceremonies, the traditions of the *Hebrews*. As however the notions, which they received in this manner, were necessarily indistinct, and rendered yet more so by ignorance of the language in which the genuine facts were preserved, a strange and heterogeneous mass of inconsistent

materials was from time to time collected together.

One of the first errors of the Pagan world appears to have been the worship of the heavenly bodies. When, from ignorance of letters, the accounts which they had received from their ancestors of the true God became obscure and confused, a faint recollection remained of the manifestation of the Deity, and of his conversation with man. Ignorance and superstition, therefore, in looking for the visible appearance of the Supreme Being, found no object equally glorious, and the nature of which was so little comprehensible, as that great source of light, which enlivens and cheers the whole animal creation. To transfer to this glorious luminary that adoration which uncultivated reason finds it difficult to pay to an invisible Deity, was a natural and a probable effect¹. The sun was therefore very early

¹ Τῆς δὲ κατ' Αἰγυπτον ἀνθρώπων το παλαιον γενομένης, ἀναβλεψάρας εἰς τὸν κόσμον, καὶ τὴν τῶν ὅλων φύσιν καταπλαγείας καὶ θαυμάσαντας, υπολαβὲν εἶναι δύο θεοὺς αἰθέρος δὲ καὶ πρῶτος, τοῦ ἡλίου καὶ τὴν σελήνην, ὡς τοῦ μὲν Οὐρανίου, τὴν δὲ Ἰσιν οἰομασάι. Diod. Sic. l. i. f. 1. Plat. Cratyl.—As a proof that the first notions of religion among barbarous people take their rise from these celestial phenomena, when the moon is in its wane, they say, in Otaheite, the spirits are devouring the Deity; and, when it increases, he is recruiting himself.—

early an object of worship with all nations but that singular people to whom the knowledge of the Omnipresent God was revealed. From the adoration of the sun, the transition to that of the moon was the most natural that possibly could be imagined. Thus the Egyptians worshipped the SUN and MOON by the names of *Osiris* and *Isis*; the former of which, in the Egyptian tongue, signified *many-eyed*¹, from the sun's overlooking all that passes in the world; the latter signified *the ancient*²: *Isis*, moreover, was always painted with horns, in allusion to the lunar crescent³.

A curious story is related by Herodotus, which, however, seems to indicate that the Egyptians were anciently possessed of some idea of the invisible nature of the Eternal Spirit. Those who worshipped at Thebes sacrificed a ram; and they say the rite originated from the following incident. The Egyptian Hercules, according to tradition, was very anxious to see Jupiter, who was for a considerable time averse to his petition: but at length, Hercules being very urgent, Jupiter skinned a

Cook's last voyage, v. i. p. 166. May not the mode of personifying these heavenly bodies, which even at present pervades all languages, have proceeded from this notion?

¹ Πολυφθαλμον.—Diod. Sic. l. i. f. 1.

² Το παλαιον. Ib.

³ Ib.

ram,

ram, and putting on the skin, exhibited himself to Hercules under that form; whence the statues of Jupiter were carved with a *ram's* head ¹. If there was any foundation for the tradition, it had its rise probably from some enthusiast, who earnestly desiring a more perfect manifestation of the Deity, in the moment of ecstasy might have seen a ram, and might consequently fancy that the Divinity had assumed that appearance.

But there is in the human mind a principle, which causes it to delight in fiction; a principle which induces it to be both enamoured and deceived by its own inventions, and which, upon the slightest ground, will build a fabric of delusion. At a very early period, therefore, this passion rose beyond restraint. All the scattered remnants of true history, which tradition had imperfectly preserved, or which could be supplied by the intercourse of different nations, proved so many means of adding to the number of the gods. The worship of the serpent was almost universal²; and there is no religion, some of the rites of which do not bear an allusion to the deluge. The venerable patriarch Noah, from being revered as the father of men, came at last to be worshippèd under different names, as their

¹ Herod. l. ii. c. 42. ² Bryant's Myth. v. ii. p. 40.

creator. He is evidently the Saturnus, the Janus, the Poseidon or Neptune, the Thoth, Hermes, Menes, Osiris, Zeuth, Atlas, Prometheus, Deucalion, and Proteus of all the ancient fables¹. Not only the patriarch himself, but all the circumstances of his history, have been strangely metamorphosed into divinities. The dove, the ark, even the raven and the olive-branch, have all occupied different places in the sacred mysteries of Paganism, and with direct allusions to their derivation².

The fertile genius of Greece, which delighted and misled mankind, imparted to every thing which had the smallest air of mystery, "a local habitation and a name." A rite or ceremony, the origin of which was ill understood, was presently furnished with a fable to account for its institution; a maimed tradition, or sometimes a mistaken etymology, employed the imaginations of the poets, and gave rise to a dynasty of gods. There is a curious instance of this explained by a learned antiquary of our own times. He has demonstrated, that *Men* or *Menes*, one of the Egyptian divinities³, was the same with the cele-

¹ See this decidedly ascertained in the 2d vol. of BRYANT'S Mythology.

² Ib. v. ii.

³ Originally the patriarch Noah. Bryant's *Myth.* v. ii.

brated

brated Minos of Crete, upon which island there was a temple or tower to this divinity, called *Men-tor*, or the tower of Menes. To this temple the Athenians were annually obliged to send some of their youth to be sacrificed, in the same manner as the people of Carthage sent their children as victims to Tyre¹. From these circumstances arose the beautiful fable of the Minotaur; and as there was a *Men-tor* in Crete, there was a *Tor-men*, now Taormina, in Sicily, where the same brutal rites were also performed. These towers were commonly situated on the sea-coast; they were peculiarly dreaded by mariners, wherefore the same author supposes, with much probability, that the tremendous Scylla was no other than one of those fatal temples, where the shipwrecked stranger was inhospitably sacrificed. In the same temples the rites of fire were performed. Hence arose the celebrated fable of the Furies: the term *Furia* is evidently derivable from *Phur* (fire) the priestesses of which, being engaged in these inhuman and inhospitable rites, were not improperly converted into the tormentors of the damned.

It would be almost an unbounded, though, I think, not quite an impracticable, task, to trace the origin of the innumerable fables with which

¹ DIOD. SIC. l. xx.

the mythology of Greece is crowded. I shall therefore pass to another source of error and confusion in the theology of the ancients, which probably has contributed, not less than any of the preceding, to increase the number of their deities; I mean, *attributing to their early monarchs the names and characters of their gods*. I have already mentioned Osiris and Isis as among the first deities of the Egyptians, and remarked that the sun and moon were worshipped under these appellations. It appears that the Egyptians afterwards bestowed the names of *Isis* and *Osiris*, by way of compliment, upon some of their early monarchs; and tradition confounded their story with the original adoration which was paid to the sun and moon¹.—Here we have a very probable account of the origin of that worship which was paid to deceased men, founded on the testimony of a respectable author. The want of an exact register of time, induced them to throw very far back the æra of *Osiris* and *Isis*; and the tradition was, in the time of Herodotus, that no God, in the form of man, had reigned in Egypt for upwards of 11,340 years—a period, which the active genius of their priests had taken care to fill up with events, suited to the capacity and the taste of their disciples. During that period of

¹ Diod. Sic. l. i. f. 1.

miracles,

miracles, the sun had no less than four times altered his course; twice rising where he now sets, and twice setting where he now rises¹. When, according to the same tradition, the gods reigned in Egypt, they reigned by turns, nor were they all at once upon earth². *Orus*, the son of *Osiris*, was the last who reigned among them; and this *Orus* was the Grecian *Apollo*³.

A circumstance which countenanced exceedingly this unreasonable multiplication of divinities, was an ignorance of natural causes, since it led to the supposition of a distinct author for all the different operations of nature. The worship of fire pervaded all the ancient world; but this possibly might be a branch of that adoration which was originally paid to the sun, and fire might be considered as an emanation from him, or a part of his substance⁴. The Germans worshipped the earth, as the parent of all things⁵. The Otahiteans assign as a wife to the Supreme, a deity

¹ Herod. l. ii. c. 142.—The amazing accounts of Chinese antiquity had, I doubt not, the same origin, and are equally authentic.

² Οὐκ ἑνταῦς ἀλλὰ τοῖσι ἀνθρώποισι.—Herod. l. ii. c. 144.

³ Ibid.

⁴ The Persians esteemed fire a god, but the Egyptians thought it an animal of a wild and savage nature. HEROD. l. iii. c. 18.

⁵ Tac. Ger. c. xl.

of the female sex, who is not of the same nature with himself, but is called O-tepapapa (a rock) : these produced O-Heena, the goddess who procreated the moon ; and from them all the inferior gods, and even mankind, are descended ¹. The difficulty also of accounting for the suggestions of our own minds, probably contributed greatly to the same effect. The people of Madagascar, on any emergency, repair to the tombs of their ancestors for advice : and I think it is very clear, that divination, ordeals, and even the use of oracles, arose from a similar prejudice. Unable to explain the emotions of the mind, on philosophical principles—having admitted the belief of superior beings, and yet finding it difficult to comprehend how one distinct being could set all in motion, and be the author of seeming contrarieties—men readily conceived every different disposition and passion to have a separate mover ; hence a god of love, a goddess of wisdom, &c. &c. The Stoics endeavoured to refine the absurdities of polytheism into the mysteriousness of allegory ; and this system they pretended to support by referring to the etymology of the names of the gods. They asserted, that the one Universal Being was figured under dif-

¹ Forf. Ob. c. vi. f. 9.

ferent names, according to his several attributes. That he was called *Dios* (Jove) from the Greek particle *dia* (through), because *through* him are all things; *Zeus* or *Zén* from *zên* (to live), because he is the *life* of the world; *Athênæ* (Minerva) from the privative particle *a*, and the verb *tithêmi* (to place or limit) which makes *theiên* and *theinai* in some of its inflexions, because his empire is *unbounded*. The Supreme Being, they added, was called *Hêra* (Juno) from *aër* (the air); *Hêphaistos* (Vulcan) from *phaino*, *phaiastos* (to shine), from his influence over *fire*; and *Démêtêr* (Ceres) from *dê* or *gê* (the earth) and *mêtêr* (a mother), from his existence *in*, and influence *over*, the *earth*¹.—The Greek fable, concerning the introduction of evil², has, I confess, much the appearance of allegory, as if the box of Pandora was intended to represent the effects of passion. Notwithstanding this, I perfectly agree with a late writer³, that allegory was above the reach of the human faculties at so early a period as the invention of the Greek mythology. Ingenious as are the stoical etymologies, if admitted they would only confirm the conjecture which I have just stated; and I am well

¹ Diog. Laert. lib. vii. Vit. Zeno, p. 528.

² Hesiod, Op. & Dier. v. 60.

³ Lord Kaim's Hist. of Man,

persuaded

persuaded that, from the first, Jupiter, Juno, Vulcan, &c. were considered as separate divinities¹.

Thus it appears, that the polytheism of the ancients was derived from several sources: First, from some remains of genuine theology, but obscured by time, and from mistaking the heavenly bodies for the manifestations of the true God. Secondly, from confused relics of history, which were greatly misunderstood by the people, and still further misrepresented by the poets. Thirdly, In the dark ages, the compliments paid to the early monarchs, by ascribing to them the attributes and names of the divinities, occasioned the history of those monarchs to be confounded with the mythology of the gods.

The multitude of demigods were no other than the first inventors of arts and government, who probably owed their *apotheosis* to the pretence of having derived their inventions from heaven, in order to magnify the value and difficulty of them. Such an opinion is directly connected with the belief, that they are the descendants or particular favourites of the gods, and

¹ A much better account of the etymology of the names of the heathen deities may be found in Mr. Bryant's Mythology.

will easily exalt them to the skies. Most nations have these genii, or demigods: even the Otaheiteans have theirs, one of whom is of a malignant disposition, and resides near the Morais and Toopapous, or places of burial ¹.

I am at a loss, whether to account the worship of animals a species of idolatry or of polytheism. The *cow*, which is so illustrious a benefactor to mankind, was an object of adoration in all the first ages of idolatry ². By the laws of Egypt, the *hawk* and *ibis* were sacred animals; and to kill them, either voluntarily or by chance, was punished with death ³. The Egyptians worshipped even the *crocodile*, though a destructive animal, because the terror of those creatures served to protect the country from the incursions of Arabian plunderers ⁴. What I think the most probable account of this species of superstition is, that they did not merely worship the animals themselves, but, by paying them a kind of respect, thought they honoured and gratified the *particular deity* who created and sent those

¹ Forf. Ob. c. vi. f. 9:

² Mr. Bryant supposes, with great probability, that the bull was a symbol among the Egyptians, which alluded to Noah, who is styled a *husbandman*, ἀρτοποις γης (or man of the earth). Myth. v. ii.

³ Herod. l. ii. c. 65.

⁴ Diod. Sic. l. i. f. 2.

animals into the world for the benefit of mankind.

The belief of *national* and *local deities* is a natural consequence of dividing the Supreme Power, and supposing the existence of inferior deities. The Persians sacrificed to the *Grecian deities* THETIS and the NEREIDS, as imagining them to preside over a particular tract of country¹.

II. Analogous to this, is the notion of the Divine Power being peculiarly resident in *certain places* and *things*². The Germans carried to battle images and sacred relics from the consecrated groves³. The Otaheiteans fix the images of their gods upon the prows of their vessels⁴, as amulets to protect them from danger; probably because they think no evil can befall the gods. The custom was also prevalent among the Romans⁵; and the traces of it we yet retain, without advertent to its origin.

In this account of things, we find, perhaps, the most powerful source of idolatrous worship. There is, indeed, another very probable cause of

¹ Herod. l. vii. c. 191.

² Lucos ac nemora consecrant, deorumque nominibus appellant secretum illud, quod sola reverentia vident.— Tac. Ger. c. 9.

³ Id. c. 7.

⁴ Forf. Ob. p. 459.

⁵ Pers. Sat. vi. 30. Act. Apost. xxviii. 11.

idolatry. It is natural for men to endeavour to depict or imitate whatever is an object of veneration; a degree of respect will be paid even to the representation of such an object, and that respect will soon degenerate into adoration.

I am conscious it is the opinion of some, that the worship of the spirits of departed men preceded every other species of false religion and idolatry. As the opinion has been supported by some respectable names, I am sorry I cannot subscribe to it: for, in the first place, we find that some barbarous nations existed, among whom there was no tradition that their deities had ever been upon earth, or had ever assumed the human form. Herodotus expressly affirms of the Persians, that they do not, like the Greeks, believe that ever the gods existed in the form of men¹: and this we find to be the case in some parts of the new world. Secondly, In those countries where idolatry was first practised, the original idols were not images of men, but of the heavenly bodies, of beasts, &c.², as among the Egyptians.

¹ Οὐκ ἀνθρωποφυεας εἰκομισαν τες θεες, καδαπερ οἱ Ἕλληνες, εἶπαι.—Herod. l. i. c. 131.

² See Diod. Sic. & Plat. Cratyl. quoted in the beginning of this Essay.—The Paphian Venus was not in a human form. *Simulacrum Deæ non effigie humanâ, continuus orbis*

fians. Thirdly, It seems more natural that the belief of superior and immortal beings should lead to the hypothesis, that the good and great enjoy a degree of blessedness in another state, than that the belief of the immortality of the soul should first lead to religious worship.

III. Superstition may exist without any settled notions of religion¹. The people of Madagascar have no religious system, and yet abound in superstitious follies and prejudices. Such is their attention to what they deem fortunate or unfortunate days, that they put to death all the children born on the latter². DIVINATION and ORDEAL TRIALS, however, arise from a notion, though a false and mistaken notion, of a Divine Providence, and superior agents. The Machlyen virgins, a people of Africa, fought with stones on the feast of Minerva, or the warlike goddess; and those that died of their wounds they called false

his latiore initio tenuem in ambitum, metæ modo, exurgens, et ratio in obscuro.—Tac. Hist. l. ii. c. 3. See Herod. l. 2. passim.

¹ The story of Lord Herbert of Cherbury is well known: an extraordinary sceptic, who prayed for a particular revelation, and believed that he obtained it, though he could not assent to the Christian miracles. We may add the examples of Richlieu and Dryden.

² Raynal Hist. Phil. & Pol. l. iv.

virgins¹. The German armies were always attended by forcereffes². To divine the event of a war, they selected a captive of the rival nation, matched with one, every way equal, of their own; and each, in the arms of his country, contended publicly for victory³. When the Scythian king was sick, it was customary to call the diviners, who pointed out which of the citizens had perjured himself, swearing by the *household gods of the king*⁴. The suspected person being examined by divination, if he denied it, other diviners were sent for; and if they agreed with the former, the man was beheaded, and the first diviners possessed his goods. The polished states of Greece soon changed these barbarous rites, the certain instruments of priestly tyranny and avarice, for a milder and more ingenious species of superstition.

The craft and duplicity of the ancient ORACLES equal any thing that we read in the records of religious imposture. In cases of pestilence, or other national calamities, when the oracles were consulted about the means of assuaging these

¹ Herod. l. iv. c. 180.

² Cæf. de Bell. Gall. l. i. c. 50.

³ Tac. de Ger. c. 10.

⁴ Τας βασιλειαυς ιστας.—Herod. l. iv. c. 66.

evils,

evils, they generally ordered a temple to be built, or some *tedious* rite to be performed, before the completion of which the calamity must cease, according to the common course of nature. The oracles were frequently suborned, and sometimes detected: there are instances on record of both the Pythia, and the person who bribed her, being severely punished¹.

IV. The first use and origin of SACRIFICES², is a subject involved in much perplexity. Those who consider the worship of the dead as precedent to the use of sacrifices, will not be displeased with the following account of the matter. It was a custom among some rude nations to place the urn, or vessel, which contained the ashes of their ancestors, at their feasts on certain days; and

¹ Herod. l. vi. c. 66.

² It is obvious, that I would only be understood to speak at present of the heathen sacrifices. I flatter myself, that in a future work I shall be able to prove that all the Jewish rites, and their sacrifices among the rest, had quite a different origin as well as a different aim. The only offering mentioned before the flood is that of Cain and Abel; but I think the nature of that different from the sacrifices which took place both among the Jews and heathens. The practice does not appear to have been established previous to the dispersion of mankind, but to have been a new invention, which probably originated in the manner I have stated.

they would in all probability make a libation of wine, &c. upon it, as supposing that, after death, it was possible to participate of the same enjoyments as when alive. As this kind of veneration for ancestors is not far from adoration, the custom would soon be transformed into a religious rite.

Another, perhaps better, solution of the difficulty may be sought for on principles already noted in these Essays. It has been remarked, that the principle of barbarian justice is revenge¹. It is therefore probable, that, figuring the Deity like themselves, a sacrifice might be meant to appease his anger, as he could not be satisfied without some retribution². The Egyptians imprecated the sins of the people upon the head of the sacri-

¹ Essay I.

² At Otaheite, they asked if one of the men, who happened to be confined while Capt. Cook was *wind-bound*, was *taboo*, or intended as a *propitiatory sacrifice*.—Cook's last voyage, vol. i. p. 163.

When the inhabitants of the Friendly Isles labour under some grievous disease, and think themselves in danger of dying, they suppose that the Deity will accept of a little finger, as a sacrifice efficacious enough to procure the recovery of their health. There was scarcely one in ten of them who was not found thus mutilated in one or both hands.—Cook's last voyage, vol. i. p. 403.

The same at Sandwich Isles.—Id. vol. iii. p. 162.

ficed beast¹; which indicates that they originally meant him to suffer as a substitute for themselves. They also beat and mortified themselves during the sacrifice, which has little appearance of a joyous ceremony in gratitude to Providence, or a convivial entertainment designed for the gods.

Probably, on the idea of atonement, *human sacrifices* preceded every other. The nations which were extirpated by the Israelites used them, and we do not know that they used any other. This circumstance seems alluded to by one of the Jewish prophets, who, speaking in the character of a superstitious person², exclaims, *Shall I give my first-born for my transgressions? the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul*³? The notion of *visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children* seems intimately connected with this idea; and that such a notion was universal in the remote periods of antiquity, we have every reason to believe⁴.

It has been already remarked, that human sacrifices have been common, at one time or other, in every Pagan nation upon earth⁵. The Magi

¹ Herod. l. ii.

² I think in the character of Balak the king of Moab.

³ Micah iv.

⁴ See the answer of the oracle to Cræsus, Herod. l. i. c. 91. See also Herod. passim, particularly l. ix. c. 119.

⁵ Essay I.

who

who accompanied Xerxes, at a place called *The Nine Ways*, sacrificed nine youths, and as many virgins, after the *Persian manner*, burying them alive. Amestris, the wife of Xerxes, arriving at an advanced age, sacrificed in the same manner fourteen noble children to that god, who they say is *beneath* the earth¹. The circumstances attending the performance of this horrid rite, in most nations, afford additional proof, that the original intent of *sacrifice* was to appease a malignant deity². We are well assured, that the occasion was, in general, when some public calamity befel the nation; and one person was selected to bear the sins or the misfortunes of the multitude. In Otaheite, on certain solemn days, the priest enters the Morai, or temple, and, after staying some time, returns and informs the people, that the deity demands a human sacrifice; he then indicates the person, who is immediately seized, and beaten till he is dead³. This dangerous power, we may well suppose, is much abused by the priests; and, to confirm it, the superstitious peo-

¹ Herod. l. vii. c. 114.

² Since the above was written I have seen an account of a father in India, who sacrificed himself upon a funeral pile, in order to satisfy the deity, and stop the progress of a contagious distemper, which raged in his family.

³ Forf. Ob. c. vi. f. 9.

ple are persuaded, that if the priests invoke the evil genius, he will kill, by *sudden death*, him whom they chuse to mark out as a victim¹. We may readily imagine in what manner, and by what means, the intentions of his infernal majesty are fulfilled.

The first relaxation of this rigid branch of superstition is, when the exercise of it is confined to captives², or very inferior persons³: beasts are afterwards substituted⁴; and at last the gods are supposed to content themselves with an offering of the simple fruits of the earth⁵.

THE CONSECRATION OF PARTICULAR PERSONS to the Deity, seems to be only a refinement upon the practice of offering human sacrifices. I before had occasion to shew, that the purest and most innocent persons were originally singled out as victims to the gods. The same refinement takes place in the consecration of *living offerings*, if I may be allowed the expression. As soon as the idea of pollution came to be annexed to the

¹ Forf. Ob. c. vi. l. 9.

² The Scythians sacrificed to the god of war every hundredth prisoner.—Herod. l. iv. c. 2.

³ Such is now the case in Otaheite.—Ellis's Narrative of Cook's last voyage.

⁴ See the Iphig. in Aulis of Euripides, last scene.

⁵ See the beautiful verses, Hor. Car. l. iii. Od. 23.

intercourse

intercourse of the sexes, it became a leading principle to dedicate to the gods the chaste and unpolluted.

V. The timid nature of man, so prone to admiration, and so adroit in deceiving himself by the excursiveness of fancy, is in nothing more strikingly exemplified, than in the popular fables of the early ages¹. Most nations have had their race of *giants*, of *one-eyed monsters*, of *griffins*, or of *centaurs*. A barbarous tribe, making a sudden, or nocturnal incursion, and destroying part of a people, naturally terrifies the rest, who magnify their enemies, and transform them to a *genus* of monsters. Herodotus somewhere informs us of certain navigators who doubled the Cape of Good Hope, and reported that, during their

¹ A man lost his sight at the battle of Marathon. He reported that, at the onset of the battle, he saw a phantom of a monstrous appearance start from the opposite rank of the enemy, which immediately killed the person who stood next him, and at that moment he lost his sight. Herodotus could not be deceived in the great outline of the fact, as he tells us he knew the man: nor is the solution, in my opinion, difficult. The man was probably of a timid nature, but a sense of honour had retained him in his post till the onset of the battle. The phantom was doubtless one of the enemies; and the man seeing his neighbour fall, received so violent a shock, that his visual nerve was first disordered, and afterwards destroyed, by the sole influence of fear. Herod. l. vi. c. 117.

progress,

progress, they saw on a certain part of the African continent a race of pigmies, but could not approach them. The truth is, we judge of the size of bodies by the distance at which we suppose them; and there is nothing in which the eye so much deceives us as in distance. The face of countries, and even the atmosphere, is so various, that we are no judges of distance in a strange country¹. The natives, therefore, of those countries, to which Herodotus refers, were probably timid people, and fled before the navigators, who seeing them appear small at what they judged no great distance, without further reflection, reported they had seen a nation of pigmies.

Partial darkness, or obscurity, are the most powerful means by which the sight is deceived: night is therefore the proper season for apparitions. Indeed the state of the mind, at that time, prepares it for the admission of these delusions of the imagination. The fear and caution which must be observed in the night; the opportunity it affords for ambuscades and assassinations; depriving us of society, and intercepting many pleasing trains of ideas, which objects in the light never fail to introduce, are all circumstances of terror: and perhaps, on the whole, so

¹ See Reid's Inquiry into the Human Mind.

much of our happiness depends upon our senses, that the deprivation of any one may be attended with proportionable horror and uneasiness. The notions entertained by the ancients respecting the *soul*, may receive some illustration from these principles. In dark or twilight, the imagination frequently transforms an inanimate body into a human figure; on approaching, the same appearance is not to be found: hence they sometimes fancied they saw their ancestors; but not finding the reality, distinguished these illusions by the name of *shades* ¹.

Many of these fabulous narrations might originate from *dreams*. There are times of slumber, when we are not sensible of being asleep ². On this principle, Hobbes has so ingeniously accounted for the spectre which is said to have appeared to Brutus, that I cannot resist the temptation of inserting it in his own words. "We read," says he, "of M. Brutus (one that had

¹ Tristis imago.—Virg.

² When the thoughts are much troubled, and when a person sleeps without the circumstances of going to bed, or putting off his clothes, or when he nods in his chair, it is very difficult, as Hobbes remarks, to distinguish a dream from a reality. On the contrary, he that composes himself to sleep, in case of any uncouth or absurd fancy, easily suspects it to have been a dream.—Leviathan, par. i. c. 1.

" his

" his life given him by Julius Cæsar, and was
 " also his favourite, and notwithstanding mur-
 " dered him) that at Philippi, the night before
 " he gave battle to Augustus Cæsar, he saw
 " a fearful apparition, which is commonly re-
 " lated by historians as a vision; but consider-
 " ing the circumstances, one may easily judge
 " it to have been but a short dream. For, sitting
 " in his tent, pensive and troubled with the hor-
 " ror of his rash act, it was not hard for him,
 " slumbering in the cold, to dream of that which
 " most affrighted him; which fear, as by de-
 " grees it made him wake, so it must needs
 " make the apparition by degrees to vanish:
 " and having no assurance that he slept, he
 " could have no cause to think it a dream, or
 " any thing but a vision."—The well-known
 story related by Clarendon, of the apparition of
 the duke of Buckingham's father, will admit of a
 similar solution. There was no man in the
 kingdom so much the subject of conversation as
 the duke; and, from the corruptness of his cha-
 racter, he was very likely to fall a sacrifice to the
 enthusiasm of the times. Sir George Villiers is
 said to have appeared to the man at midnight¹,

¹ I do not recollect any plausible account of such an ap-
 parition in the day.

therefore

therefore there is the greatest probability that the man was asleep; and the dream affrighting him, made a strong impression, and consequently was likely to be repeated¹.

I cannot

¹ It has been remarked that, as knowledge and civilization have advanced, these tales of ghosts and apparitions have proportionably decreased. Notwithstanding this, one of the most circumstantial and best authenticated is of very recent date. I speak of the spectre which is said to have appeared to the late LORD LYTTELTON, previous to his death. As nearly as I can recollect the circumstances, which I had from very good authority, they were as follows. A few nights before that event, his lordship imagined that the figure of a woman dressed in white, and with a bird on her hand, presented itself at the side of his bed. The spectre drew the curtains, and informed his lordship, that at twelve o'clock on the night of the 27th of that month, November, he would certainly depart this life. The next morning at breakfast Lord Lyttelton related the story, not without some emotion, as I was told, though he endeavoured to conceal it. The intervening time he spent in his usual course of dissipation; and on the day, which the spectre had predicted to be his last, he intended to take an active part in the House of Lords. It appears, however, that on some account his spirits failed him on this occasion; he put off his attendance in Parliament, and retired with a select party of friends to his country house. During the day he supported a tolerable flow of spirits; and after supper, as the predicted hour approached, he exclaimed, "We have jockeyed the ghost!" A little before twelve he retired to bed;

I cannot dismiss this subject, without a few words respecting the ORDER OF PRIESTS; an order,

bed, and his servant attended him to assist him to undress. The servant, by his orders, prepared for him some rhubarb and magnesia in a tea-cup with water, which he was in the habit of taking; and not having a tea-spoon at hand, he stirred it with his finger. At this his Lordship was exceedingly enraged, and ordered him to go down stairs to procure a clean tea-cup, &c. When the servant returned he found Lord Lyttelton in a convulsion; the alarm was immediately spread through the house, but he was found past recovery, and actually died nearly about the very hour which the spectre had predicted. These facts are well attested, and seem very strongly to countenance the belief of apparitions; since there was not only an appearance, but a prediction, and that prediction was actually accomplished. Notwithstanding this, I am yet well persuaded that the whole will bear a very consistent philosophical explanation. It is well known that his Lordship was possessed of an extremely weak body, and an uncommonly timid spirit; and both of these were probably much increased by the profligacy of his life. A man of his licentious character would naturally rate the doctrines of revealed religion very low; but such men are often found to be strongly tainted with superstition. Nothing could be more probable, than that a dream similar to what we have related should occur to a man in such circumstances; and though he affected to disregard it, when we consider the timidity of his disposition, it is not extraordinary that it should make some impression. Indeed that it did make an impression, I have been well assured, and appears from his want of spirits to attend the House of Lords

order, I believe, self-created in all Pagan nations, and consisting of the most knowing men in

as he intended. Whilst engaged in the bustle of company, he in a great measure appears to have forgotten the cause of his uneasiness: but what was his situation at the crisis just preceding his dissolution? He was at that period much indisposed in his health; he had just thrown himself into a violent agitation, by his resentment against the servant. In the heat of his passion he had forgotten the prediction, and had imprudently left himself *alone* at the very moment which had been marked for his death. Is it extraordinary, in such circumstances, when his great timidity is considered, that he should fall into some degree of syncope or fainting; or is it extraordinary that, in such circumstances, the general consternation should prevent proper means being taken for his recovery, especially when we consider that he had none but unskilful persons about him? Such at least appears to me to be the real state of the case; it is sufficient to satisfy my own mind, and has satisfied several sensible persons with whom I have conversed on the subject: I offer it however rather as conjecture than proof; and can only address my reader in terms equivalent to the common quotation from Horace—

“ Si quid novisti rectius istis

“ Candidus imperti,” &c.

I must add, that there appears no instance in the Scripture History of any thing equivalent to the common notion of a ghost or apparition from the dead; if we perhaps except the story of Saul and the Witch of Endor. This, however, appears to have been altogether miraculous. The woman herself seems no less frightened than the rest of the company; which indicates,

in the early ages. The priests are frequently the *Legislators*, and always the *Physicians*, in a rude state of society. The Otaheiteans call their physicians *Tabouva-mai*, that is, *Priest-wound*. But I am of opinion that the *Priests* did not originally usurp the office of *Physicians*, but the *Physicians* that of *Priests*: in other words, whoever made any important discovery or improvement in the arts, pretended to derive his knowledge immediately from divine inspiration, and was regarded as a Prophet by the vulgar. Thus a body of men rose by degrees into a monopoly of the learning, and often of the power, of nations. Political interests, or the prevalence of superstition, would ere long set them apart as mediators, or confidential servants of the Deity, by whom they appeared to be so highly favoured.

Thus, I have given a summary of the causes which, I think, have produced the most popular superstitions. That some of the pomp and folly of Paganism was conceded to the prejudices of the Jews, by the institutions of Moses, I am

indicates, I think, that the spirit which did appear was not the spectre she meant to raise. She was probably a juggler, and intended to play off some deception; but Divine Providence, on this solemn occasion, sent a real apparition to condemn the guilty monarch. N.

8
willing to grant ; but let those, who assert all religion to be a human invention, account for the phenomenon, That, when the whole human race besides was infected with barbarous and absurd superstitions, *the Unity of the Godhead* was maintained, and every branch of superstition which led to *idolatry*, to *cruelty*, or *injustice*, precluded, by the religion of one nation only, and yet that nation in many respects as rude and uncultivated as the rest of mankind. Let them account for another fact, namely, That a system of morality was never made the basis of any religion but of *one*. Let them inform us, by what effort of its own the human mind could extricate itself from a labyrinth of error, in which it became so naturally involved, and which disgraced some of the most polished ages, and some of the most enlightened understandings, that the annals of mankind can produce.

ESSAY

E S S A Y V.

OF CERTAIN MORAL PREJUDICES.

Of Customs particular and general.—Certain particular Customs.—General Customs.—Anthropophagi.—Painting the Bodies.—Right of Occupancy.—Slavery.—Primogeniture.—Female Subjection.

IN a preceding Essay I have endeavoured to demonstrate how little is to be attributed to the influence of climate, soil, or other physical causes, upon the human mind : and I think the history of religious error, as detailed in the last Essay, is, so far as it extends, a corroboration of the former theory. It remains, therefore, to explain, how certain moral prejudices, and customs contrary to reason and equity, came to be established, independent of physical causes.

Customs are either *particular* and *national*—such I mean as are peculiar to certain societies, and such I apprehend will be found for the most part to originate in accident or policy—or they are of a more *general* nature, and such as are

found to have prevailed in almost every nation at certain periods of society.

To particularize the first species of moral error, would be an endless task. Many national customs are produced by the policy of individuals, many by accidental causes. If we may credit Herodotus, the first who introduced among the princes of the East the custom of being invisible to their subjects, was Deioces, who concealed himself from public view entirely from political motives. He saw that familiarity diminishes respect—that vulgar admiration is most powerfully excited by a seclusion from their sight; and he found this stratagem necessary, having raised himself to empire from a private station, and having a barbarous people to command¹. It is not impossible that the custom of sacrificing domestics, &c. on the death of a monarch, might originate with some politic prince, who intended by these means to secure the fidelity of his domestics. The same reason might, with some plausibility, be offered for the celebrated custom in India of burning widows on the funeral pile of their husbands. We are not, it is true, without another solution of these moral phenomena, in the opinion, that the deceased

¹ Herod. l. iii. c. 38.

might

might stand in need of domestics in another world. The Scythians buried with their kings a concubine, a cup-bearer, a cook, a groom, a waiting-man, a messenger, and some horses: and afterwards strangled about fifty domestics and horses¹. Religion among the Persians seems to have been made much subservient to policy. Lepers were not admitted to the society of others, because the vulgar were persuaded that they had offended the sun. Rivers and streams were kept sacred from defilement by religious prejudices².

The distinction of meats, as well as of dress and ornament, can only be attributed to accidental causes. There is no good physical reason to be assigned why the Africans would not eat the flesh of the ox, or the Egyptians that of the swine³. To expose or destroy their children, is an act against nature; yet it has been practised by many barbarous nations, on different accounts: the most extraordinary instance is that of the society of the Arreois in Otaheite; but the practice is accounted for from these Arreois being a religious society, and devoted to celibacy. Doubtless the children were at first clandestinely disposed of; but the society growing

¹ Herod. l. iv. c. 71. ² Herod. ³ Id. l. iv. c. 186.

opulent and powerful, their debauchery became more shameless and avowed. A custom is related by Herodotus, as being prevalent at Babylon as well as at Cyprus. The married women, in those countries, were obliged once in their lives to wait at the temple of Venus, and there to suffer the violation of their chastity by whatever stranger occurred ¹. This absurd and indecent custom probably arose from some barbarous rite of hospitality.

But, in the infancy of society, many erroneous customs and prejudices have almost universally prevailed; and these have in general arisen from the poverty of barbarous nations, or from their indistinct and unjust notions of property.

Whether the practice of *feeding upon human flesh* originated in necessity or not, is difficult to determine. Possibly a notion of savage courage might introduce the practice, possibly revenge ². Among some people it assumed the form of a religious rite ³: Darius asking the Greeks, if they would eat their dead parents, they replied, as we may well imagine, in the negative; asking

¹ Herod. 1. i. c. 199.

² The New Zealanders never eat their own friends; on the contrary, when asked if they did, they appeared shocked and offended.—Cook's last Voyage, v. i. p. 138.

³ Herod. 1. i. c. 216.

the Indians (who eat theirs) if they would *burn them*, they expressed a considerable degree of abhorrence at the question¹.

I have little doubt that the practice of *anointing* and *painting* the body, was introduced at first to supply the want of clothes. Oil was found of service in preventing the effects of cold, and paint preserved the body from insects. What was introduced by necessity, was continued as ornament. The Indian renders himself terrible to his enemy, and amiable to his mistress, by a variation in his mode of painting. When painting comes to be considered as an ornament, an inclination succeeds to make that ornament permanent; hence the practice of *tatawawing* and fantastically marking the body with different devices.

When instruments of war and clothing were scarce, it was an object of much importance to secure the *spoils* of the dead. The original motive was, however, soon lost sight of; and we find the heroes of Homer superstitiously contending for the bodies of the slain.

Moral prejudices are the effects of habit. Men are accustomed to see success annexed to power; in ages, therefore, when they have arrived at no

¹ Herod. l. iii. c. 38.

degree of accuracy in abstract reasoning, it is not very difficult to imagine that *power alone is sufficient to constitute right*. Theft is not marked as a crime till mankind have made considerable advances in civilization; on the contrary, Homer speaks of it with some degree of respect; Lycurgus encouraged it; and we read of whole nations who practised it, even among one another, with impunity¹. It has been already explained by what slow degrees the dormant principles of equity and right were awaked within the human breast, and moulded into the solemn forms of law and justice². But the *law of force*, and the *right of occupancy*, existed much longer with respect to societies, than with respect to individuals. Moses promises the Israelites *cities which they builded not*³. The Samians, having left their own country, and proceeding to found a colony under the protection of the Zancleans, seized the city of their benefactors, who were then absent at war⁴. Indeed the wars of the ancients were in general expressly made for the sake of plunder; and I fear the prejudice is not quite obsolete in an age, which boasts of humanity and refinement⁵.

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¹ Diog. Laert. Pyr. l. ix. p. 684. ² See Essay I.

³ Deut. vi.

⁴ Herod. l. vi. c. 23.

⁵ The compact which was entered into some years ago by certain powers for the dismemberment of Poland, was a gross invasion

In some instances, where the inconvenience is obvious and universally felt, the moralist and philosopher may attract the notice of mankind, and produce a reform; in other cases, we find the errors of barbarians mature into prejudices, and the long practice of injustice and absurdity cause them to be mistaken for law and duty. That *power constitutes right*, is the maxim only of barbarians—this is the real basis of SLAVERY; and yet we find that the learned Grotius was not superior to the vulgar prejudice. In his futile apology for this atrocious violation of the dispensation of Providence, he gravely tells us of a *right by generation*[†]; for which right, by the way, he is unable to produce a single proof. If we do not wish to dispute the best attributes of the Deity, *each individual is sent into the world with a view to his proper happiness; and no human being was ever yet created SOLELY for the use of another*. The power of the parent extends only as far as is necessary

invasion of all the rights of property.—How could those monarchs with any degree of justice hang a petty thief?—It requires, I think, some degree of casuistry to see any fair reason, according to the common principles of justice, why the emperor of Germany should interfere in the present dispute between the Turks and the Russians.—Is the British name quite unsullied with respect to certain acquisitions of territory in the East? N.

[†] De Jur. Bell. & Pac. l. ii. c. 5.

cessary for the good of the child; for it is evident that no law of God authorizes any man *to do evil to another*. The laws of civilized society allow only this power, and for obvious reasons it is confined to the state of infancy; whatever future duty is expected on the part of the child, is founded on the principle of gratitude alone. But to this kind of reasoning barbarous nations are necessarily strangers. The *Gauls* had absolute power of life and death over both wives and children¹. Aristotle informs us, that the authority of the father in *Persia* was perfectly tyrannical, and that he treated his children as slaves². The Roman laws, in this respect, are too well known to need recapitulation.

Grotius is not more fortunate in another argument for slavery. He intimates that, by the law of nature, prisoners taken in war may lawfully be made slaves, because the captor might kill his prisoner, did he not esteem it more profitable to preserve him alive. Unluckily for this argument, *it is necessary first to prove, that the captor has a right to kill his prisoner*. The necessity of self-defence is the only excuse that can be pleaded in justification of homicide, and this necessity ceases as soon as your enemy is in your

¹ Cæs. de Bell. Gall. l. vi. c. 19.

² Arist. de Mor. l. viii. c. 12.

power,

power. It seems to be the maxim of Grotius, that precedent justifies every practice; even precedent from barbarians. Happily for the rights of mankind, his work is superseded by others, as much superior in liberality of sentiment, as in all the excellencies of literary composition.

Though slavery originated in the ages of barbarism, yet in that period we must not expect to find it in its utmost rigour: for as in the individual, so in society, it is time that matures vice, and brings it to its extreme. The *Germans* treated their slaves with the most commendable humanity. Each possessed in tranquillity his little cottage, his *penates*, his wife and children, and only paid a proportion of cattle or of corn as a rent to his lord. It was very rare that a master beat or confined a slave; some instances indeed occurred of killing them, not through rigid discipline or deliberate cruelty, but through instant provocation, and sudden anger¹. The laws of the *Jews*,

¹ Tac. Ger. The state of slavery is at present much milder among barbarous nations than among those which are called civilized. See Mr. NEWTON'S *Thoughts on the Slave Trade*. The truth is, uncivilized people do not think so unreasonably and so highly of themselves, as those who pretend to refinement with no ground-work of philosophy or erudition, and therefore are less apt to treat those who happen to be subject to them as inferior animals. N.

with

with respect to slaves, breathe a spirit of gentleness and liberality, though that nation is by no means to be accounted polished or refined¹. Very different were the conduct and institutions of the *Romans*. Cato the Censor, though otherwise a just and benevolent man, sold infirm and old slaves². It was customary, in the reign of Claudius, to expose infirm and sick slaves in the island of Esculapius; and under the same emperor a law was first enacted to prohibit the putting of any slave to death, *merely on account of his age*³. The treatment of slaves was rigorous at *Athens* as well as at *Sparta*; but the philosophic mind of Aristotle rose superior to the cruel and selfish customs of the age. By his testament he enjoined, that none of his slaves should be sold, but that the younger should be carefully educated to a certain age, and then set free⁴.

The right of PRIMOGENITURE, which distinguishes the first-born son, by assigning to him the

¹ Deut. xv. The right of retaining slaves at all, was doubtless one of those *things*, which Moses *permitted to the Israelites for the hardness of their hearts*: as will be evident, if we consider how much he has laboured to restrain and limit the abuse, and to render the condition of slavery as tolerable as possible. N.

² Plutarch.

³ Suet. Vit. Claud.

⁴ Diog. Laert. Vit. Arist.

whole or more considerable part of the inheritance, has been, with much learned labour, traced into the feudal policy. But this custom has existed where the feudal system is not supposed to have prevailed. The true foundation of the custom will be found in those notions of *occupancy* which prevail in every rude society. In the early ages, it is probable that, when a man ceased to live and enjoy his property, the first person who could occupy his place took possession of it; and this person was generally the *eldest son*, when he happened to be of age. The right of primogeniture was established not only among the northern people, but in the east, from the remotest periods of antiquity¹. By the Jewish law, the eldest son claimed a double portion of the inheritance²; and I have some suspicions that, in the early periods of Rome, this custom was prevalent, if not universal: the Roman institutions which divided equally the inheritance, were copied from the more humane and enlightened system of Grecian jurisprudence.

The injustice and folly of *primogeniture* affecting the inheritance, in civilized states, is evident from the common practice of evading the custom, by permitting the absolute disposal of our posses-

¹ Gen. xxv. 31.

² Deut. xxi. 17.

sions by testament, even where the legislature has not courage to contend with an old, though ridiculous prejudice. There are indeed reasons why the eldest son should possess the *least* instead of the *greatest* part. He proves generally more expensive to his parents during their life-time, than the rest of the children: he is also the first provided for, I mean by being introduced into a profession: and, on the whole, it is assigning to chance, and not to reason, the distribution of effects. The expectation of superior fortune often serves only to nurture the first-born in pride, insolence, vanity, and ignorance, who therefore proves frequently a very unworthy person; while the rest, and probably the most deserving part of the family, are legally consigned to want and misery, vice and prostitution¹.

The ABJECT CONDITION OF THE FEMALE SEX in certain countries, and that most unjust and impolitic institution POLYGAMY, some authors have attempted to account for upon physical principles. But if we reflect that, at certain periods of society, such has almost uniformly been the case in every

¹ A very able politician ascribes, in a great measure, the prosperity of the colony of Pennsylvania to the non-existence of any right of primogeniture.—See Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, b. iv. c. 7.

nation, we shall be cautious of adopting visionary theories, and shall find a much easier solution in the ignorance of barbarous nations, who are incapable of arriving by the force of reasoning at any abstract principles of moral fitness; but, taking things according to appearance, universally adopt the maxim, That power constitutes right.

E S S A Y VI.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE EFFECTS OF CIVILIZATION, AND THE CHARACTER OF THE PRESENT TIMES.

General View of the Argument respecting Barbarism and Refinement.—Inquiry how far Improvement is limited by Nature and Providence.—Manners of the middle Ages.—The comparative Merit of the present and the last Age.—Science.—Literature.—Manners.

THE disputes of the learned, concerning the comparative merit of the present times and those of the polished nations of antiquity, have been succeeded by others of a more whimsical complexion. Not content with degrading us below the standard of Greek and Roman excellence, some philosophers have even asserted that we lose in a comparison with savages themselves. While one writer of our own times has gravely deduced our origin from the *orang-outan*, the laudable endeavours of another have tended to write us into *orang-outanism* again.

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If we put the rage of novelty out of the question, there are other reasons to be assigned for the praises, which men of superficial science have so extravagantly lavished upon the early ages. The manners of those ages are only contemplated at a distance, and the prominent vices are lost in the shade of time; whereas the vices of our own age and country are better known, and more minutely recorded. As the arts of life are increased, the wants and desires of men are increased and enlarged: where passion is generated, some vices will likewise be produced; but it by no means follows, that the evils of civilization are more numerous than its benefits.

Declamation may fill volumes with extended catalogues of the vices and miseries of civilized life; but I believe a fair view of the progress of society will convince us, that the savage is exposed to most of the evils of polished and social life, without its consolations. Fraud¹, intemperance², and even gaming³, are vices common to both; and I question whether the balance is not against the savage: add to these the

¹ Forf. Ob. 236.

² Herod. l. i. c. 133, 134.; l. iii. c. 4. Tac. Ger.

³ Cook's last voyage, v. iii. p. 144.

gloominess, taciturnity, indolence, excessive cruelty¹, sanguinary superstitions and prejudices², and the vindictive spirit of rude nations. As they are in the highest degree idle, lavish, and improvident, it is not possible that they should have to administer to their own necessities in a season of scarcity, much less to those of others³; whereas, if there be persons wretched amongst us, there is at least a chance of relief.

The unequal distribution of property is the leading objection against civilized society; but surely this is preferable to no permanent property whatever; when the uncultivated earth leaves its miserable inhabitants the sport of chance, the prey of famine and the elements. Laws are sometimes unjustly administered, and despotism sometimes sports with the persons and properties of the subjects: still this is better than the human passions totally unrestrained by law, individuals preying upon each other⁴, the weak and

¹ Herod. l. iii. c. 159. ib. ad fin.

² Herod. l. iv. c. 103, 104.

³ Capt. Cook remarks even of the female sex, in barbarous countries, that all their views are *selfish*, without the least mixture of regard or attachment.—Cook's last voyage, v. i. p. 124.

⁴ "If I had followed the advice of all our pretended friends (in New Zealand) I might have extirpated the whole

and unprotected submitting in all cases to superior force. What is the oppression of a government which levies taxes, perhaps heavy upon its subjects, to that dreadful system of domestic tyranny, which leaves wives, children, and dependants at the mercy of a capricious mortal? Besides, I must remark, that *tyranny* is by no means the necessary accompaniment of civilization. If we consider, throughout modern Europe, the general mildness and moderation in the exercise of the powers of government, and consider that this cannot, under so many different forms, be the result of policy or law, we can only attribute it to the prevalence of civilization, science, and true religion. Nothing marks better the happiness of a society, than the increase of population; and surely this

“ whole race; for the people of each hamlet or village applied to me by turns to destroy the other.”—Cook’s last voyage, v. i. p. 124.

“ When any of them (the servants or slaves at the Friendly Isles) happened to be caught in the act of stealing, their masters, so far from interceding for them, would often advise us to kill them. As this was a punishment we did not chuse to inflict, they generally escaped without any punishment; for they appeared to be equally insensible of the shame and of the pain of corporal chastisement.”—Cook’s last voyage, v. i. p. 233.

argues strongly against the savage state. I might enlarge upon the numberless benefits and conveniences, the lives that are preserved, the evils that are avoided, by the arts of medicine and mechanics; the humanity in war; the social intercourse of nations; and the perpetual sources of refined pleasure, in the gratification of laudable curiosity, and the cultivation of the liberal sciences.

The arts and sciences have been ignorantly declaimed against, as contributing to the growth of luxury; but if we consider rightly, we shall find the injustice of the accusation, and that the whole fact is, the same causes contribute to the increase of luxury, and the cultivation of science, namely, wealth and leisure. But certainly these causes may exist, and frequently the highest degree of luxury exists, without any taste for either arts or sciences; hence those states, and those legislators, which have attempted to restrain luxury by prohibiting the arts and sciences, have mistaken the cause, and have levelled at a symptom, and not at the disease.

It is, however, no part of my intention to apologize for the vices of civilized people; nor do I pretend to assert, that the vicious can be happy in any state. The prodigal, the debauched, the avaricious, or the gambler; the mercenary murderer,

derer, the bawd, or the slave-merchant, never can be respectable or happy. The sole advantage, which I assert in favour of polished society, is this, That those who wish to know virtue, and to practise it, have better opportunities, and may live happier, in a well regulated and civilized community, than in a state of anarchy and rapine.

That the most improved period of society falls greatly short of that ideal perfection, to which the enlightened minds of a few individuals would aspire, must be indeed confessed: and though we have, in the course of these Essays, contemplated human nature, as to refinement and civilization, in a progressive state; it would be rashness to affirm, that this progress is unlimited by Nature or Providence. It has been supposed, not only that human virtue is circumscribed by passion and weakness, but that civilized society itself contains the seeds of peculiar vices, which are to corrupt and deprave it: that the moral, like the natural world, is subject to certain periodical revolutions; and that these conduct, as in a circle, from barbarism to refinement, and thence to barbarism again: that wealth and luxury will promote indolence in the superior ranks of life; and that an unequal division of property will end in tyranny and oppression.

Ignorance and barbarism are the supposed consequences of these events ; the subversion of mild and equal government, confusion and anarchy. I think, however, that the latter hypothesis is not sufficiently supported by facts, or by the best authenticated histories of the human race. The *middle ages* are generally referred to, as an instance in point ; and it is generally supposed that civilization, at that period, was in a retrograde state. But if we consider to how small a space, and to how small a number, the science and literature of Greece and Rome were confined ; if we consider the immense and almost incredible number of the northern invaders, and that they exterminated or reduced to slavery the ancient and civilized inhabitants of Europe—we shall be inclined to view the middle ages in a very different light ; indeed as times when the civilization of mankind was actually in a progressive state.

To the despotism and violence of the latter periods of the Roman power, the *middle ages* added the absurdities of barbarous superstition ; ordeal trials, and religious persecution : yet even then the calamities of war began to be sensibly diminished. It was no longer the ruling passion and study to engross dominion, and exterminate nations. Personal prowess was more
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in esteem than martial. Bloodless battles were fought by knights cased in armour; and there was more of parade than execution in their military enterprizes. Courtesy to the vanquished, and indeed to all objects of distress, became a ruling principle. Religious despotism counteracted the excesses of the civil. We may trace the first mitigation of the severity and rigour of the feudal laws, into the illegal indeed, but salutary, interference of the clergy; and to the same cause we may attribute the abolition of domestic slavery. In short, if those ages cannot boast the triumphs of genius, they can, in many respects, those of humanity; and were certainly not less moral than the polished Greeks and Romans.

Despotism, or other causes, may impede or restrain the progress of improvement; but it does not appear that they can actually throw mankind back again into the ruder stages of society. The empire of luxury enervates genius, and diminishes industry; but it can never be so universal as to induce total ignorance and barbarism.

The PRESENT TIMES have been cited as a proof how limited the progress of improvement is; they have been invidiously compared with the declining periods of ancient *Rome*; and melancholy predictions have resounded in our ears
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of the downfall of liberty, principle, and religion ; the prevalence of luxury, effeminacy, corruption, and vice.

It is not easy to be impartial in what concerns our contemporaries. I have not known an author who has decided with tolerable candour on the character of his own times. It would therefore be presumption to hope that I should distinguish with clearer optics, or be less attracted by those partialities, which have misled others, who have preceded me on this delicate subject.

If I dare hazard an opinion on the comparative merit of the present with the last age, I would say, that, in some respects, we have undoubtedly gained ; and yet particular circumstances have arisen, to retard our progress in improvement. The middle and inferior ranks of society are certainly much enlightened, but I fear the superior are much corrupted and depraved.

SCIENCE is perhaps at present more extensively diffused than at any period from the creation of the world. Many practical improvements, and some interesting discoveries, have been made ; and yet we have heard complaints, and not ill-founded, that the pleasant and flowery tracts are only in cultivation ; that the great principles of science, which engrossed the atten-

tion of a *Newton*, are laid aside for the more indolent occupations of botanical arrangement, or the unimportant accumulation of shells, insects, and medals. But no branches of learning have suffered so much neglect as those which concern human nature most; those which respect the mind of man, and the principles of moral conduct. The names of Locke, of Cudworth, of Berkeley, and of Clarke, are heard with blushing ignorance, or vacant surprize.—In short, nothing has been gained, and I am much mistaken if something has not been lost, in this particular department of science.

In LITERATURE we have yet less to boast; and I wish I could even add, that the national *taste* were likely to survive the wreck of *genius*. Our standard writers are even now neglected; and the listless and languid habit of modern readers is only to be excited by the quickening touch of novelty. Not to speak of poetry (for which, notwithstanding some splendid examples, the national taste seems to have suffered a considerable abatement) even those elegant and fanciful productions, which promise chiefly entertainment, are presently disregarded; nor can the most brilliant gems of the imagination, which alone have charms for indolent readers, insure a popularity of above a day's duration. The flippancy

pancy of France is preferred to the grace, the energy, I had almost said the *virtue*, of our native language; a tale of gallantry, or an unconnected farrago of mock pathetic, is preferred to the elegance of Hawkeſworth, or the moral of Johnſon; and the tinsel of Sterne¹, to the classic gold of Addiſon².

¹ I am ſorry to find, that the admirers of Mr. Sterne have thought their favourite author degraded by this comparison. Let me aſſure them, in all honeſt candour, that if it were poſſible to oblige them, by ſpeaking more favourably of him, it would give me pleaſure to ſatisfy every well-diſpoſed reader; but I muſt confeſs myſelf one of thoſe inſenſible and incorrigible beings, who can read trite ſentiments and mock pathos without being overwhelmed with admiration or melted into tenderneſs, merely becauſe it is the faſhion to be ſo: I muſt further own myſelf of that impatient temper, that I cannot toil through volumes of nonſenſe to find a wretched quibble, or a filthy double entendre. Thoſe who wiſh further proofs of my want of taſte on this ſubject, may conſult a note in my tranſlation of Biſhop Lowth's Lectures, v. i. p. 375. N.

² It would be injuſtice not to remark, that hiſtory has been lately cultivated with uncommon ſucceſs; and that we have ſome hiſtorians now living, who would do honour to any age. Miſs Burney is, perhaps, unequalled in her line of writing; Mr. Knox is a pleaſant and judicious moral writer. Notwithſtanding the laudable endeavours of theſe, and others, I am however of opinion, that the national taſte in literature has ſuffered ſome depravation.

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That the MANNERS are humanized, and the feelings much improved, I believe few will doubt. Intemperance, riot, and rusticity have given place to more refined luxury, and the easy thoughtlessness of polite dissipation. The boisterous passions are all of them perhaps reduced to a better discipline: which was not the case in the decline of *Roman* morals. Avarice is not now even the vice of traders. These have been succeeded by other vices, less generally pernicious or disgusting, perhaps, but more contemptible and ridiculous.

The predominant feature of the times appears to be an unbounded taste for *trifles*; a certain ostentatious vanity; an imitative and puerile rage for every reigning folly: it is seen in our education, our manners, and our arts. Horsemanship and dress are the accomplishments most in estimation; or to be a connoisseur in *music*, is the highest point of intellectual excellence which the man or woman of fashion can possibly attain. To think and act with the multitude, saves the trouble of thinking or acting well. Thus a blind admiration of what happens to be in vogue, prevents the discrimination of merit, and diverts into wrong channels the effusions of benevolence. Thus the claims of necessity give way to the impulses of folly. A favourite actor,

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or an infamous stage-dancer, shall accumulate an *oriental fortune*, while a man of letters perishes for want in a garret. In short, to be prodigal, yet not generous; proud, yet not respectable; covetous of reputation, and yet disregarding every solid means of acquiring it; to labour without profit; to study without information; to converse without improvement; are the characteristics of a frivolous and fantastical age. It were happy for society, if the consequences were as trifling as the pursuits and occupations of the fashionable world: but the annals of *Doctors Commons*, and the occasional reports of the *Coroner's Inquests*, too fatally prove, that to pervert or to neglect the understanding, is to deprave the heart.

ESSAY

E S S A Y VII.

OF THE THEORY OF GOVERNMENT.

New Theory of Government, as supported by some late Writers—False.—Principles of Government.—Division into two capital Branches.—Restraints and Regulations necessary for the Support of popular Liberty.—Dependance of the Supreme Power.—Established Laws.—Juridical Authority improper for large Bodies of Men.—Accountableness of Government; and the Question debated, Whether the Appointment of Ministers should rest in the Sovereign, or in the Legislative Body?—Freedom of Speech and of the Press.—Resistance to the Legislature.—A new Distinction in Forms of Government.

WERE the authorities in favour of the antiquity and prevalency of *tyrannical governments* more numerous and more respectable than they are, they would not be sufficient to prove, that despotism is the form of government most natural to man. The speculative politicians of the last century amused and misled their disciples by the intricate sophistry of the *patriarchal scheme*: and even since the defeat of
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that grand political heresy, the enemies of liberty have not been wanting in industry, nor quite unsuccessful in their attempts, to perplex with metaphysical subtlety the common sense of mankind. We are now gravely assured, *that there exists in man an instinctive appetite for monarchical government*¹; and *that, under whatever government men happen to be born, they are bound in duty to continue subject to it*².

¹ The authors of this system might as well write books to prove, that men have an instinctive appetite for *learning to dance*; and the very same train of reasoning will serve to support the latter proposition. For instance, it might be proved, that men have by nature faculties and capacities for this exercise; that it is both profitable and pleasant; and has been at least as general as monarchical government. Extraordinary as it may seem, this strange system is rather favoured by one of the soundest modern politicians. But where shall we look for perfection in any human performance? The rational politics of the Dean of Gloucester want no such support.

² I do not know any principle in the law of nature, on which to ground that tyrannical claim of property, which princes and states pretend in those, who happen to be born within a certain district. Every man appears, by the law of nature, to have a right to transfer his allegiance, as well as to transport his person. The only necessary restraint is, that he shall conform to the laws of that country where he happens to be resident.

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These ingenious hypotheses (for I cannot allow them any higher appellation) will as little serve the purposes of despotism as the former. If any thing in human nature be *instinctive*, the principle of *self-preservation* is so; if, therefore, the majority of any people be convinced, that their safety and happiness would be better provided for under one form of government than another, they certainly have a right to adopt that form.

From this assertion, however, it does not follow, that there are no certain principles in nature, from which a true *theory of government* may be deduced; it does not follow, that the caprice or prejudices only of a people are to be consulted. There is a point of perfection in all human arts; on this side, or beyond it, lie the regions of error; and it is only to be discovered by experience, and a careful investigation of nature and truth.

In the science of politics, as well as in all other sciences, speculative men have unremittingly laboured to destroy that simplicity, which nature and reason recommend as nearest to perfection; and in over-carefully providing against the despotism of one man, human ingenuity has often constructed a government so very complex,

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that it is only to be conducted on principles to the full as arbitrary as the genuine maxims of tyranny. In many modern *republics*, it is evident, that the complex mechanism of several different councils only serves to conceal that despotism, which is the main-spring of the whole. If men could impartially consider the nature and ends of government, without bending their whole attention to any one of its abuses, undoubtedly the true principles of that science would more easily be discerned.

The general design of government being *the happiness of the people*, its immediate objects are, 1st, *The defence of the state, as a whole, against external evils and attacks*; and, 2dly, *Its internal and domestic regulation, as composed of individuals, in respect to their conduct towards each other*: and these constitute the two different departments of government, which, for the sake of distinction, I shall call *POLITICAL* and *CIVIL*, though I do not know that I am quite correct in the use of those words.

The *political* concerns of a state might, without controul, be committed to the management of one, or of a few wise and well-informed persons, their own interest being so nearly connected

ned with that of the state¹; were it not, that it would be also necessary to entrust them with such a share of power, as might enable them successfully to invade the rights of their fellow-citizens. The discordant opinions of a multitude interrupt and delay political business; nor is a popular assembly competent to judge of the nice, and almost imperceptible relations, by which political events are connected. The state, as a whole, is properly represented by a single person. The necessity also of secrecy and dispatch, renders it expedient that the political concerns of a state should be entrusted in few hands².

The case is widely different in what regards the *civil* or *domestic* regulation of the state. Of the common principles of equity and justice the people are always qualified to judge. In these

¹ By the wisdom of the ruler, the people are protected, and the ruler himself is a partaker in the common prosperity; as the pilot who directs the ship, in saving others, provides for his own safety; and the teacher of exercises exercises himself.—Arist. de Rep. l. iii. c. 6.

² The Long Parliament was under the necessity of entrusting a select council with the whole conduct of political affairs. Indeed it appears that these affairs were chiefly transacted by a single person, Sir Henry Vane.—Macaulay's Hist. of England, vols. v. and vi.

too every individual is more immediately interested ; and on the effects of laws none can so properly decide, as those for whom, and in respect of whom, they are enacted. The only effectual bar to oppression, therefore, is, that *in the enacting of laws, they be deliberated upon by such a number of different ranks, that the general sentiments of the nation concerning them may be properly collected.*

In extensive empires, it is found convenient to contract the *legislative* body ; and, instead of convening the people in general, to select a competent number. Besides the inconvenience to individuals, if all were to attend the business of legislation, the difficulty of collecting the suffrages, and the compactness and activity of a select body of men in comparison with an unwieldy multitude, are additional reasons in favour of this arrangement. Provided the absolute nomination of the *representative body* be not in the Sovereign (which would be contradictory to the first principles of this theory) ; or in a faction (which might on some occasions be the means of subverting the government) ; I do not apprehend the mode of election to be of material importance. The truth is, however the elections be conducted, both the electors and the elected will be liable to corruption. In those instances

instances which our own experience furnishes, in those places where the elections are most popular, we do not find either constituents or representatives possessed of superior wisdom or superior virtue.

The *administration of the laws*, and the distribution of justice, might, it is true, be placed in different hands from those, which conduct the *political* concerns of the state. But, besides that in a few instances the civil and political affairs appear to be connected, such an arrangement would be establishing two powerful parties in the state, whose contention might prove sometimes fatal, and would be always prejudicial. The unity of government is more completely preserved, by assigning to the same person the whole of the *executive* power, civil as well as political, with the right of appointing the inferior officers. This addition of power adds greatly also to the splendour of the supreme authority, creates a greater dependance in the people, and will admit of such limitations as effectually preclude all apprehensions of danger.

Such appears to be the true foundation and *Theory of Government*. The authority, indeed, which is thus committed to the supreme and active power of the state, may appear at first enormous; but the principles, which have been al-

ready stated, of themselves suggest certain salutary restraints and limitations, by which, without impeding the course of justice, or endangering the state, the peace and safety of the subject may be sufficiently provided for, and the excesses of power effectually controuled.

I. In the preceding scheme of government, the convenience and good order of the state are consulted, in committing to the hands of one or a few persons the direction of the public affairs; and the only security which the people have for the unmolested enjoyment of domestic happiness and freedom, is the privilege of being governed by laws, which are enacted by themselves, or by persons chosen from among themselves, and equally interested in the preservation of their rights and liberties. Since, however, it can neither be necessary nor convenient, that a popular legislative assembly should continue to sit without intermission, some particular authority will be necessary, occasionally to suspend its deliberations, to convene the members, in fact, to regulate in general its operations; and, to preserve the unity of government, this privilege may be placed in the hands of the *supreme executive power*. The point therefore of most importance to popular liberty, is to prevent the executive power usurping the legislative authority; a necessary
step

step to which would be, omitting to convene the legislative assembly. If the executive power be dependant for subsistence on the legislative, the necessity of assembling it will be sufficiently obvious; nor does the latter in this respect assume more than its proper functions, consistently with the theory of this Essay. To *make a law for levying a tax on the public*, is as much a branch of legislative authority, as the enacting of any ordinance or statute whatever; and this is, in reality, the sole advantage derived by the people of England from that controul over the revenue, which is possessed by the representative assembly: not that the public burthens are less, or the public treasure in general better applied, in free than in despotic governments.

II. Immediately connected with this principle, and equally the result of the theory which I have asserted, is the important maxim, *that no power can act independent of established laws*. Indeed, I know no better definition of a tyranny, than that it is a government according to will, in opposition to a government according to law¹. When *Plato* represents mankind, in his golden age, to have been governed by superior beings upon earth², it is easy, from the tenor of his

¹ Arist. de Mor. l. v. c. 10.

² De Leg. l. ii.

writings, to discern the allegory; and to understand, that, by the government of the gods, is meant a government according to the immutable principles of equity and truth. It is the maxim of the Platonic school, that justice is no other than *moral truth*; all *truth* is derived from *God*; and therefore a people so governed may be accounted under the immediate government of the Supreme Being.

It may at first sight appear favourable to civil liberty, to entrust great bodies of men with juridical authority; but, in reality, nothing can be more subversive of the rights of individuals. When the ignominy of an unrighteous decree is extensively diffused, a partnership in wickedness diminishes the fear of censure and reproach. Individuals have a character to lose; and where the judges, in any cause, are not numerous, and the proceedings public, it is almost impossible to be unjust.

Juridical authority being exercised by the whole body of the people united, was the great blemish of the Athenian and the Roman governments, and may justly be accounted among the principal causes of their corruption and ruin.

III. Let it be remembered, that, according to the theory which is now advanced, the supreme authority is considered as a trust, and not as a right.

right. Every trust implies accountableness: but an appeal to the whole body of the people would, in this case, be attended with the same inconveniences as in the business of legislation. To avoid the danger and absurdity of two distinct representative bodies, it is safest to assign this controuling power to that body, which is assembled for the purpose of making laws; and this, in some measure, counterbalances the extraordinary privileges which we have already conceded to the executive authority.

It is however of use, that the person of the supreme magistrate should be esteemed in some measure sacred: and the complex business of the state requiring many inferior instruments in the transaction of affairs, the wisdom of the English constitution has confined the prosecution to the particular department where the guilt really exists; that is, to whatever servant of the crown has been engaged in the criminal transaction: and there can be no injustice in such a measure; since, in a free state, no man can be compelled to serve in any employment against his own conviction¹.

¹ These, and the danger of frequent sedition and anarchy, appear to be the true reasons why the *servants of the crown* only are punished for ill administration. The miserable quibbles of lawyers, concerning the maxim, *that the king can do no wrong*, are utterly unworthy the notice of any rational person.

A question

A question has been lately agitated in this country, *Whether the executive power ought to consult the legislative in the appointment of the inferior officers?* If the theory maintained in this Essay be true, to withdraw the prerogative of appointing its own officers from the crown, would be to confound the two great branches of government, which ought to be kept distinct; or rather, it would render one of them a mere pageant, without efficiency, without responsibility. In another view, if the ministry were to be appointed by any other than the Crown, it would destroy that unity which ought to prevail in all political transactions; would annihilate that confidence, which the Prince ought to have in his officers; and would produce much confusion in the conduct of public affairs. It is therefore safer for the representatives of the people to remain contented with their legal province, of calling to account for their misconduct the servants of the crown, than to contend for the actual appointment of them.

IV. After all, in states, where the whole body of the people is not consulted in the enacting of laws, it is necessary that a certain controuling or censorial power should reside with the people at large; and connected with this, is the right of canvassing, and conversing freely upon public affairs.

fairs. It is plain, that grievances can never be so thoroughly known or remedied, neither can improvements be so frequently suggested in the jurisprudence of a nation, where the liberty of speech and the liberty of the press are denied to the people. The fear of censure, both in public and private life, is one of the most powerful guardians of virtue.

We have a convincing proof in this nation, that very little evil can possibly attend this popular concession. There is certainly less tendency to sedition, less real violence, I might almost say, less real activity with respect to political concerns, in the people of *England*, than in any other people; and this (paradoxical as it may seem) is in a great measure the result of that unbounded liberty, which they possess of investigating, and conversing upon all public concerns. Their zeal wastes itself in words; their desires are sufficiently gratified by the excursions of the imagination; they fight ideal battles, and effect ideal revolutions. The same cause produces changeableness and discordancy in their opinions. They are neither cordially united to the effecting of any purpose, nor are they steady in it, as they certainly would be, if the severity of government obliged them to be more secret in their transactions.

tions'. The press too, it must be remembered, is open to both parties; and, as literary men are generally necessitous, the balance in point of ingenuity and eloquence is, for the most part, on the side of the court. The ministerial writers, if they do not convince, often moderate the rage of party. Indeed there are numbers, who, like the man in the play, are of the opinion they heard last.

I may add, that the habit of considering, and of scrutinizing political matters, induces many to the cool and temperate resolution of hearing both parties; and the object is frequently removed, or the heat of faction abated, before they have time to form a determination. Thus, the very circumstance, which weak princes have always been inclined to consider as most fatal to their power, is to the kings of England the best pledge of peace and security.

Upon the plea, that a delegated legislature represents in all respects, and stands in the place of the people, the RIGHT OF RESISTANCE to an ordinance of Parliament is denied. But upon

² A whisper may fly as quick, and be as pernicious, as a pamphlet. Nay, it will be more pernicious, where men are not accustomed to think freely, or distinguish betwixt truth and falsehood. Hume's Essays, vol. i. Ess. 2.

the principle, *that all sovereign and legislative authority whatever is a delegation from the people, and only to be exercised for their good*¹, there cannot be a doubt concerning the *right of resistance*. It is a right, however, that no good man will ever wish to see exerted; and, happily for this country, the constitution has been so long established on the most equitable principles, that the occasions are very few on which resistance can be lawful. Nothing less than an *alteration of the established constitution* can be a sufficient ground of resistance to the legislature of these kingdoms: and, further, it must be clearly ascertained, that the *alteration* is against the *consent* of the *majority* of the *people*. If, in this case, redress on peaceable application be denied, *resistance* is certainly justifiable.

If, on so trite a subject, I have been able to advance but a little new, it will be a sufficient apology for obtruding myself upon the public

¹ Ut enim tutela, sic procuratio Reipublicæ, ad *utilitatem* eorum qui commissi sunt, non ad eorum, quibus commissæ, gerenda est. Cic. de Off. Pursuant to the maxim, that the *Parliament ought to be a perfect representation of the people*, as supported by some Whig writers, would not *resistance* to a Parliament, constituted on the principles of equal representation, be unlawful? and yet even such a parliament might inroach upon the liberties of the people.

after so many distinguished writers on the science of politics. The topics of this essay have indeed been frequently insisted on before; but though certain principles of government have been so long approved by experience, I have not seen *the reasons* of them minutely investigated. That nations in so rude a state as our northern ancestors should have adopted a system of government, which after-ages have found so wise and expedient, has hitherto been accounted an inexplicable phenomenon. From the preceding theory, the reader will probably perceive, that the form of government, which they made choice of, was the simple dictate of nature and reason—common sense drew the outline, and after-occasions suggested successive improvements.

Whatever government has any mixture of freedom in its constitution, that is, every lawful government¹, must, in a great measure, be formed upon this model. I shall therefore venture to deviate a little from the distinctions in the forms of government adopted by Aristotle and Montesquieu, and shall class all free governments under two heads, *viz.* MONARCHIES, or

¹ Όσαι μὲν πολιτεῖαι τὸ κοινὸν συμφέρον σκοποῦσιν, αὗται μὲν εἶναι τυγχάνουσιν ἔσσαι κατὰ τὸ ἀπλῶς δίκαιον· ὅσαι δὲ τὸ σφετέρῃσι μόνον τῶν ἀρχόντων, ἡμαρτημέναι πασαι, καὶ παρεκβάσεις τῶν εἰσθῶν πολιτειῶν. Arist. de Rep. l. iii. c. 6.

those

those governments, where the whole executive power is committed to *one person*; and REPUBLICS, or those governments, where the several branches of the executive government are (nominally at least) preserved distinct, and committed to several hands. *Monarchies* may be *elective* or *hereditary*; the administration of *Republics* may also be *elective* or *hereditary*: the latter is what, in modern language, is usually called *Aristocracy*.

E S S A Y VIII.

THE ADVANTAGES OF THE REPUBLICAN FORM
OF GOVERNMENT COMPARED WITH THOSE
OF MONARCHY.

General View of the Arguments in favour of Republics.—Arguments on the opposite Side.—Review of the Democratical States of Antiquity.—Athens.—Lacedemon.—Rome.

A LIVELY sense of the natural equality of mankind, a high opinion of the dignity and excellence of human nature, and a violent resentment of the injuries to which whole nations have been exposed by the abuses of *Monarchy*, will naturally dispose the feeling and the generous mind to seek in speculation a form of government, which seems to promise a less odious monopoly of power ; while men of cooler and more phlegmatic minds are generally inclined to entertain a less favourable opinion of the virtue and wisdom of mankind, and from the records of antiquity deduce what they call experimental proofs, in objection to the visionary schemes of philosophic benevolence.

The

The advocates of the *republican* scheme rest the principal of their arguments on the absurdity of a government, founded solely on the unmeaning distinctions of *ancestry* and *birth*. To govern well, they observe, demands the most exalted faculties, and the most extended knowledge, of any human art: but kings are not selected for their abilities or their virtue; the supreme authority descends like any common inheritance, and the next heir seizes upon the vacant office, however ill qualified for the discharge of its duties¹. On the contrary, though it cannot be denied that *republics* are sometimes arbitrarily conducted, they are always conducted with ability at least; and who would not prefer the domination of a Pericles, a Scipio, or even of a Sylla, to that of a James or a Caligula?

The *morals* of a nation under the *republican* form of government, they assert, are stricter and more severe than under that of *monarchy*. In the latter government, the people are liable to be corrupted by the example of their superiors, and the kings themselves are without those restraints, which serve to keep in order the passions of other men. The hereditary monarch (whose

¹ See the *Oceana*, and other works, of the celebrated Harrington.

education is generally imperfect, if not actually vicious) too frequently fancies himself above the censure of the public; whereas the principal persons in a republic will be inclined to adopt a decency and sobriety of manners, if but to humour and deceive the multitude.

A government that invites every individual, according to his abilities, to the first employments of the state, certainly promotes emulation, and that emulation is the parent of improvement and virtue. Science, therefore, and particularly political (which is intimately connected with moral science) will probably be more generally diffused in republican than in monarchical states. Pericles, in his funeral oration, boasts of his countrymen, "that even those were no inferior "statesmen, who laboured with their hands".

Notwithstanding some exceptions, the genius of a republic seems more favourable to peace than that of a monarchy. There is a certain degree of subordination in warlike communities, inconsistent with the republican spirit. On secrecy and expedition depends the success of most military enterprizes; whereas the counsels of democratical states are necessarily tardy. Wars are too frequently engaged in, merely through

¹ Thuc. l. ii.

the folly or caprice of a monarch, and the most obstinate and pernicious wars are those, which are occasioned by an ambiguity of title, or a contest for the right of succession:

The position, that the administration of republics is more frugal than that of monarchies may, I think, justly be questioned. The faction, intrigue, and consequently the bribery, prevalent in popular states, may occasion as lavish an expenditure of the public treasure by those in power, as the *trappings of royalty*.

The arguments on the other side are chiefly levelled against the practicability of the democratical system. It may, indeed, say the friends of limited monarchy, serve to amuse a poetical imagination, like that of Plato, to project a system for the "public institution of youth, and for the "gradual accession of the most worthy to the offices of the state;" but by whom are these ordinances to be carried into execution? On whom shall we depend for the due observance of them? If the succession is to be preserved by the magistrates electing one another, is there not danger that the partialities of kindred and of friendship will interfere with the public good? If the giddy and impatient multitude are to be the sole guardians of the laws, is there any reason, from past experience, to hope for wisdom, virtue, and dis-

interestedness, in their determinations¹. National virtue is seldom any thing more than a blaze of passion, a momentary enthusiasm. The heroic virtue of Greece survived the battles of Marathon and Platea but a short time; and the plunder of conquered provinces was a more powerful motive with the Roman wolves, than national glory. However absurd, therefore, the idea of hereditary succession, we shall be reduced to that, or, what is equally absurd, a succession by seniority, if we would avoid the selfish intrigues of aristocratical ambition, or the violence and injustice of anarchy and popular tumult.

Though in a multitude of counsellors there may be safety, there can be little advantage in a multitude of governors. In a monarchy, there will be a uniformity in the execution of the laws: in a republic, different constructions of the laws, and different modes of administration, as suits the ambition, the jealousy, or the caprice of those, who are entrusted with the several branches of the executive power. They will be frequently induced to oppose and interrupt each other.

¹ The *Vox Populi* has been, somewhat hyperbolically, styled *Vox Dei*.—Certainly, if the multitude be a God, it is of that class of wooden divinities which the inspired writer describes; *eyes have they, but they see not, &c.*

There

There will be frequently discordant, and generally wavering and tardy counsels.

When the whole executive authority is committed to one man, whose existence, in a manner, depends upon that of the state, and to whom the inferior officers are accountable, the interests of the state will be less liable to be sacrificed to the interests of individuals, and undermined by bribery from a neighbouring power. The king must be weak and depraved beyond any common pitch, who will sell his peculiar privileges, and even his own personal security. If an inferior officer be bribed, or prove disobedient, if such a one indeed be only suspected, he may soon be removed, and all the mischief he can do cannot possibly tend to the subversion of the empire: but bribe one of the leading men of a republic, and the whole state is thrown into confusion; he may at least impede all their undertakings; and by procrastination, if no other way, effectuate their ruin.

A king is not only more interested in the welfare of a state, but he has fewer interests of his own to interfere with it, than any private citizen of a republic¹. Virtue or glory alone can engage

¹ The neglect of a *common interest* is proverbial; nor did this inconvenience escape the penetration of Aristotle. *Ημεν*

gage the latter in the public service; an immediate interest may unite with virtue in the former, or sometimes act for the good of the state without virtue.

A king, if he act wrong, has only venal support; but men selected from among the people to govern the rest, must of course have strong support from family connections, alliances, and a train of clients: and these they will have in addition to all the advantages of a monarch. If therefore the persons, so entrusted, should happen to be united, as were the Decemviri at Rome, they will be able to retain the people in more abject subjection than any single sovereign; if (which is more likely, and indeed has been the case in almost every democracy that we read of) these ministers of the commonwealth should be devoted to some one man, he will, supported by them, rule the state with a more absolute authority than any monarch, who is under the strict limitation of laws, and the jealous observation of a popular legislature. On the other hand, should the popular men of a republic not be united, the consequences are strife, enmity, be-

γὰρ ἐπιμελείας τυγχάνει το πλείστον κοινόν· τῶν γὰρ ἰδίων μάλιτα φροντίζουσι, τῶν δὲ κοινῶν ἥτον, ἢ ὅσον ἑκάστῳ ἐπιβάλλει.—Arist. de Rep. l. ii. c. 3. Melancholy examples of this truth may be seen in the Olynthian orations of Demosthenes.

traying

traying the public trust, at least neglect of the public business, and, not seldom, civil war.

A king is always, in a great measure, removed from a direct intercourse with the people; which, however it may assist him in preserving an empty dignity, affords no real accession of power. He cannot personally ingratiate himself with the multitude (that easy instrument in the hands of the plausible and crafty). The majority of a nation too are always suspicious of a monarch, and jealous of encroachments by him. Popular liberty will, therefore, not be so easily invaded, as when a favourite of the public, whose views they seldom penetrate till it be too late, is at the head of affairs.

If it be said, that the danger of falling into the power of any one man is removed by the frequency of elections in a republic; the friends of monarchy may reply, that abundant experience convinces us, when an adroit person has once acquired authority, that he cannot easily be deprived of it; and, whoever be the nominal ruler, such a person will be, in reality, the animating spirit of the whole republic. In vain do we look for an example of the pure, equal, democratic form of government. Those which in the ancient world were called republics, were little else than *elective monarchies*, in which one tyrant suc-

ceeded to another. Athens, from the battle of Marathon, was governed by a series of artful and intriguing men, who possessed themselves, from time to time, of the whole power of the state. Thucydides asserts, in direct terms, *that Athens, under Pericles, was a perfect monarchy*; and that those who succeeded him in the government, being more on an equality, ruined the state by contention¹. From the days of Scipio, we may count a succession of tyrants in the Roman republic; and if there was an interregnum, it was a scene of violence and bloodshed², until some one, more powerful than the rest, obtained the supreme authority.

The purity of republican manners may be justly questioned on the evidence of facts. Xenophon affirms, that the morals of the Athenians were debauched by the form of their government, which gave consequence and power to those, whose poverty and licentiousness were certain to abuse them³. The populace of Rome were indolent, venal, and licentious to the last degree, and derived no support from their own industry, but depended wholly on the bribes of

¹ Thuc. l. ii.

² See the truly philosophical reflections of Tacitus, *Hist.* l. ii. c. 38.

³ *De Rep. Athen.* c. i. f. 15.

candidates at the popular elections, and the occasional donations from the public granaries.

No person, indeed, can be a competent judge of the inconveniencies of the republican form, unless he be conversant in the writings of those public characters, who lived under the popular states of antiquity. The states of Greece had the truest notions of a republican government, according to nature. Every city had its peculiar policy, and the union was merely *fœderal*.— This is really what government ought to be, and what it probably would be, if men were perfect, and there were no such thing as war. But experience soon taught them how easily such a confederacy is devoured piece-meal, by some greater power: and if this had not happened, they would probably (to use an expression of Lord Bolingbroke), like the armed men of Cadmus, have destroyed one another.

The government of Athens, in *theory*, approached nearest the pure democratic form, of any that we find recorded in history. It was a system devised and improved by some of the wisest among mankind, and their laws were in many respects so excellent, that they were copied by most of the nations of antiquity. The people had both the executive and legislative power committed to them; the meanest among them
might

might be raised, by the votes of his fellow-citizens, to the command of armies, or the dignity of ambassador; and we may add, that the populace of Athens was the most refined and polished of any commonalty we have ever heard of. But whoever looks attentively at the writings of Thucydides, of Xenophon, of Demosthenes, and Plutarch, will find all these advantages, some of which were however adventitious, more than counterbalanced. Not to speak of the frequent factions and seditions, in which the most worthy were always the victims, and in which it was criminal to be neuter; Xenophon informs us, that the vulgar and the vicious were uniformly more powerful at Athens than the noble and the good¹. Those were chosen to command, who could expend the most in banquets or in pageantry². The wicked and the crafty could please the vulgar most, and were always most successful³. Their demagogues were commonly in the pay of their enemies; their councils were fluctuating, their determinations ruinously slow⁴. Demosthenes compares them to “an unskilful
“bruiser, who, when he finds himself struck in
“one part, endeavours to defend that, and leaves

¹ De Rep. Athen. c. i. ii.² Id. c. i. ii.³ Id. c. i. f. 6.⁴ Id. c. iii. f. 1. 2.

“the rest defenceless: so, says he, you, Athenians, are never prepared beforehand; and “when PHILIP invades one part of your dominions, before you determine on its defence, he “is gone to another¹.” Indeed the attempt to convene the whole of the people, to debate on public affairs, was so absurd, that it is no wonder, injustice, folly, corrupt and indeterminate counsels, were generally the result of their pretended deliberations.

The *Lacedæmonian* policy has been extolled by *Xenophon*, as much superior to that of *Athens*. But what were the *Spartans*? A brood of ferocious animals, the enemies and destroyers of human nature. The *Spartan* institutions counteracted the very end of government, which is peace and tranquillity; and *war*, the great evil of life, was made the chief business of it. Their plan of government was a plan of contradictions; they were to know no arts but those of destroying their fellow-creatures, without a possibility of enjoying the fruits of victory. The office of the Ephori² has incurred the censure of perhaps the greatest phi-

¹ I think in some of the Olynthian Orations.

² The Ephori were annual magistrates, elected by the people to controul the regal power. Their authority was so great, that they even put king Agis to death for opposing them.—Plut.

lophos and politician that ever wrote'. They were elected from the body of the people; and, though invested with the supreme authority, were generally poor, as generally dissolute, and often corrupted, to the great injury of the state. The kings, who were the best part of the *Spartan* commonwealth, were enslaved by the Ephori, and their administration rendered weak and corrupt, in compliance with, and through fear of these democratical tyrants. The senate of *Lacedæmon* is equally an object of censure with this excellent judge of human nature²; for, being chosen for life, they were liable, he observes, to age, and a decay of mind as well as of body; and whatever their crimes, they could be called to no account for them. *Xenophon*, with all his partiality, is obliged to acknowledge that the institutions of *Lycurgus* were disregarded; and that in *Sparta* there was the same ostentation, and the same love of riches and power, as in other places³.

The most illustrious example of a successful commonwealth is that of *Rome*; but there cannot be a stronger proof that the *Roman* government was defective, than that the leaders of the people were uniformly obliged to involve them in fo-

¹ Arist. de Rep. l. ii. c. 9.

² Ibid.

³ Xenoph. de Rep. Lac. c. xiv. f. 1, 3, 5, & passim.

reign wars, to prevent seditions at home. They had therefore no other bond of civil union, than that which unites together a banditti—the hope of plunder. When the empire became extensive, and the seat of war was far enough removed to leave the people to enjoy the luxury of home without disturbance, the natural consequence of their defective constitution was tyranny.—Though some restraint on the ruling powers be necessary, yet a government may be too complex, and there may be too many check-wheels in the machine; and this appears one of the capital errors in the *Roman* commonwealth. The appointment of two consuls, with equal power, was injudicious; as their disunion frequently was the cause of failure in war, and sometimes of disturbance at home. The division of the people into two distinct orders, was an effectual mean of promoting jealousy and contention. The power of the tribunes was dangerous, and contributed, more than any one cause, to the subversion of the government. These absurdities in their constitution obliged them to have recourse occasionally to arbitrary power; and there foundered the Roman commonwealth.

Republics, the administration of which is *elective*, are generally preferred to those in which it is *hereditary*. For the preference of an *hereditary*
to

to an *elective monarchy*, I shall beg leave to refer the reader to an author of our own times, who has particularly treated of the subject, and whose whole performance is an illustration of his sentiment¹. Hereditary monarchies were established very early in some nations², and in those nations they were generally very tenacious of preserving the right lineal succession. Now, in reality, an usurper often governs more mildly than the lawful heir to a throne. The prejudice is, however, salutary on the whole; for, in preventing frequent usurpation, it prevents much tumult and bloodshed: and thinking men, aware of this prejudice, are deterred from attempting a change in affairs, knowing that an usurper has little chance of a peaceful or happy reign.

¹ Mr. Gibbon's Hist. c. vii.

² Tac. Ger. c. vii.

E S S A Y IX.

OF CERTAIN CAUSES, WHICH MAY PROVE SUB-
VERSIVE OF BRITISH LIBERTY.

General Remark on the peculiar Temper of the People of England.

—Various Opinions on the present Subject.—Royal prerogative.—Lord Bolingbroke's Sentiments.—Influence of the Crown.—Military.—War.—Causes that may retard the Progress of Despotism.

THERE is no temper for which the people of this country have been more distinguished, than for the credulity, with which they receive every tale, however improbable, that forebodes the extinction of their liberties; and the gloomy pleasure, with which they contemplate every prediction of misfortune to their country.

I know not how far it may be esteemed a concession to this humour of our countrymen, to inquire into *the causes which may probably operate to the extinction of British liberty; and the reasons which we have to be apprehensive of their immediate effect.*

The

The fashion of thinking is in no science so variable as in that of politics. Two opinions have successively prevailed upon the subject under our present consideration, and have been equally popular. The politicians of the last age predicted the ruin of the constitution from the *increase of the royal prerogative alone*; but since *Montesquieu* and *Bolingbroke* have given a turn to the current of reasoning, it has been the custom to find every political evil in *the corruption of parliament*, and in what is called *the venal influence of the crown*. “To destroy British liberty,” says Lord Bolingbroke, “by an army of Britons, is not a measure so sure of success as some people may believe. To corrupt a parliament is a slower, but might prove a more effectual method; and two or three hundred mercenaries in the two houses, if they could be lifted there, would be more fatal to the constitution than ten times as many thousands in red and blue without them.”

To pursue therefore the idea of this popular writer—It must be indeed confessed, that much is to be apprehended from a parliament (if ever such a parliament should exist) composed chiefly of the *needy*, the *profligate*, and the *venal*. It is the maxim of Aristotle, “that no cause is more fatal to the liberties of a state, than the desperate ambition of men, who, by a course of vice
“ and

"and depravity, have prodigally lavished their
 "own property, and are reduced to beggary¹.
 "The only hope of such men," he observes,
 "rests on the probability of raising themselves or
 "others to a despotic power in the state²." Such
 men, whatever their pretences, should never be
 employed in any office of trust.—Men who are
 regardless both of their own interest and reputa-
 tion, can scarcely be expected to act upon any
 purer principle. Patriotism is only the outer
 circle in the vortex of self-love. Besides, that a
 loss of fortune is too frequently succeeded by a
 loss of moral feeling: the straits, the difficulties,
 the arts to obtain a livelihood, not only eradicate
 the gentler and benevolent, but the more exalted
 sentiments of humanity³.

There

¹ Γίγνεται δὲ μεταβολαὶ τῆς ὀλιγαρχίας καὶ ὅταν ἀλλοιωσῶσι τὰ
 ἴδια ζῶντες ἀσελγῶς· καὶ γὰρ οἱ τοιοῦτοι καὶνολομεν ζῆλῶσι κ. λ.—
 Arist. de Rep. l. v. c. 6.

² Thus *Hiparinus* stirred up *Dionysius* at *Syracuse*; *Cleotimus*
 at *Amphipolis*; and at *Egina*, a man of this character la-
 boured to bring in *Chares* as a tyrant.—Arist. de Rep. l. v.
 c. 6. *Cæsar*, *Cromwell*, and almost every usurper, has been
 a man of desperate fortune.

³ Hence it is evident, that the only substantial reform (if
 putting in force the established laws of the land can be called
 a reform) which our parliament could undergo, would be that
 of making the qualifications *real*; subjecting the estates of

There is, however, a degree of inconsistency in the assertion of Lord Bolingbroke, which, upon reconsideration, cannot fail considerably to diminish its force. If *an army of Britons*, that is, of Britons for the most part without property and without education, are not likely to invade the liberties of their country; why should we suspect that a *parliament of Britons*, Britons, chiefly men of property and education, would be so ready to play the parricide? If, indeed, the freedom of this constitution depended on *such a representation* of the people as exactly speaks not their own, but the sense of the constituents—as considers not their own interest, but that of the constituents, British liberty would have long since been no more. But the freedom of this constitution is supported by that general union of interests, which subsists between the people and their representatives; and by the controuling and censorial power which is possessed by the former. It is unsafe for a parliament to betray to the crown the liberties of the nation, because they must be sufferers themselves in common with the people. They might,

members of parliament to the payment of their just debts, and vacating their seats whenever they become legally dispossessed of that estate which qualified them for a seat in the house.

indeed, inroach upon their fellow-citizens, by an improper extension of their peculiar privileges; but besides that this would probably interfere with the interests of the crown (which would on such an occasion be ready to oppose) they are not always to continue members of the senatorial body; and there is a chance, that even the greatest among them may one day be returned to the mass of private citizens. If any one parliament were so far corrupted, as to enact laws subversive of popular liberty; unless the whole body of the people also were corrupted or subdued, there is little probability that the same persons would be re-elected; and their successors, who could have no share in their emoluments, would probably reverse their decrees.

The *corrupt influence of the crown* (or that by means of bribery) can never be extensive; for no minister can, without alarming the people, command a sum adequate to the complete purchase of a majority. *The real influence of the crown*, in the disposal of places, honours, and rewards, will co-operate with the other influence; and many will of consequence be blindly devoted to the inclinations of the Minister. Wrong and impolitic measures will frequently be carried into effect by this influence; but the very desire of

preserving those places and dignities open to themselves and their posterity, will prevent the members of the legislature from tamely resigning their power and consequence into the hands of the crown, and annihilating that security and those privileges which can alone give enjoyment even to the fruits of corruption.

But the truth is, the most corrupt parliament could not support its usurpations without the aid of a *military* force; and with a strong military force, there is no need of the assistance of a parliament to destroy any government or constitution whatever. It is farcical to presume upon the right of paying them. It would be truly farcical for an unarmed parliament to tell an enraged multitude with arms in their hands, "We will not pay you; we will withhold the supplies." In short, a numerous soldiery is the most desperate instrument, in the hands either of a monarch or a faction; an instrument, by which the ruin of all free governments has hitherto been effected.

Not to speak of the pernicious influence of the military, in perverting the morals of a nation^{*}; there can be no reasonable excuse for
standing

^{*} He, says Aristotle, who first invented fables, did not without reason unite Mars with Venus; for every nation of
soldiers

standing armies in this island. A naval power is our proper and natural defence; and liberty cannot be endangered by any increase of it. Seamen do not idly subsist upon the industrious part of the community; they are immediately active in promoting its commerce, and on that account, are no less essential to its prosperity than the husbandman and mechanic.

WAR is altogether *a solecism in commercial politics*. Of all the evils which threaten the destruction of this constitution, *war* is most to be dreaded, and above all, continental wars. These can alone form an excuse for the increase of the military—These will exhaust the finances—ruin the commerce—impair the strength of the nation, and convert those, who ought to be the defence and support of our liberties, into paricides and assassins. Victory on our side will only serve to raise up *tyrants* among ourselves—victory on the side of the enemy, may reduce

foldiers that ever existed have been uniformly governed by women, as was notoriously the case with the Lacedemonians. The fact is, foldiers are, from the very nature of their employment, inclined to intemperance; and therefore not only women, but the worst of women, naturally sway them.—
DE REA.

us to the worst of slavery—slavery under a foreign yoke¹.

It may afford some satisfaction to reflect, that the crisis which, by whatever means, shall ac-

¹ Is not human life fertile enough in calamities, that men are so eager voluntarily to increase them? What shall we say to the insanity of a set of wretched beings, who, exposed by nature and providence to *diseases* without number, to *sorrows* that almost hourly fall upon them; not content with these, are anxious to destroy the little portion of happiness that is left within their reach! Could some superior Intelligence, previously unacquainted with the folly of human nature, contemplate the field of slaughter, the dying and the dead, the multitudes yet surviving under the loss of limbs, and enduring the most exquisite torments—would he believe, that they had wantonly brought all this upon themselves! and yet these are the least of the evils of war; a blacker catalogue remains behind—countries desolated—property subverted—famine—pestilence—national depravity and licentiousness! *War* is, in fact, a relic of barbarous superstition. It is an impious appeal to Heaven, when human reason would better determine the controversy. Indeed, it might better be determined by the cast of a die; for in the event of a war, each party loses more than it can possibly gain.

If soldiers were mere *passive instruments*, and involuntarily forced to engage, the blame would rest wholly upon Kings and Ministers. But the man, who prostitutes his valour by *hiring himself out to massacre his fellow-creatures* at the will and caprice of another, in what does he differ, but in name, from the private *bravo*, or assassin?

complish

comply with the extinction of our free constitution, appears, on other reasons, to be at a considerable distance. There is a spirit of liberty gone abroad, and the bonds of despotism are relaxed even in countries more favourably disposed to arbitrary principles than our own. Science and literature are very generally diffused; and it is impossible for men, who reflect at all, not to discern the flimsy foundations on which tyranny can be imagined to rest: it is impossible not to discern that under a despotic government no person can be secure, who is possessed of superior merit or superior wealth: it is impossible not to discern, that the former will certainly excite the envy and the fears¹, the latter the avarice², of the tyrant and his dependants. History is much read; and it is one of the best uses of history, that scarcely a single page occurs, which does not afford ample proof, how dangerous a measure it is, to trust to the arbitrary will of any one man the happiness of a community. On this subject the complaint of Tacitus is curious; he laments that “his annals must
 “want the grandeur and the variety of those histories, which detail the transactions of free
 “states, since they are little more than the disgusting repetition of continued acts of cruelty,

¹ Tac. An. l. iv. c. 34.² Id. l. vi. c. 19.

“accusations, breaches of trust, violated friendships, and the ruin of the innocent¹.” It is plain, that though the oppression should extend to no more than a thousand persons, or to half that number, yet the apprehension of making one of that number must be destructive of tranquillity. But the truth is, in admitting one tyrant, you must admit a multitude. The chain of tyranny must descend. The monarch cannot govern with absolute authority, unless a portion of that authority be imparted to his officers. Thus every petty placeman becomes as much a despot, within the sphere of his authority, as his prince; nor will his superiors be very forward in punishing the abuses of his office, conscious that such men are necessary instruments in the hand of power, and while faithful to that purpose, the oppression of the inferior multitude is little regarded. Add to these mischiefs, that every social band is untwisted by those pests of an arbitrary government, *public informers*, whom the execrable *Tiberius* styled *the guardians of the state*²; that justice is with the utmost difficulty obtained in an extensive tyranny³; and that despotism generally stands in need of *war* to support its

¹ Tac. An. l. iv. c. 33.

² Id. l. iv. c. 30.

³ Gibbon's Hist. c. 25.

authority,

authority, in order to employ the restless and ambitious spirits of those, who might be capable of forming conspiracies; and in order to retain the people in poverty, and to withhold the means and the love of independence¹.

Thus, if reason be permitted to exert itself, mankind will want no other monitor against the evils of despotism, than their *self-interest*; but, what is perhaps of more advantage, as knowledge circulates, KINGS themselves grow wiser, and must see how little advantage can attend the power of making others miserable². "If a man will be a tyrant," says Plato, "HE must be content to live and associate only with the worst of men, and even to be detested by them³." The extreme misery of those tyrants, who have retired for safety from public observation, and who were yet incapable of enduring solitude, is an awful illustration of that providential law, which has uniformly constituted vice its own tormentor⁴. "No man," exclaims the Roman orator, "can be

¹ Plat. de Rep. l. viii. ad fin.

² In a city which consisted of good and wise men, says Plato, the contention would be as much to *avoid* the administration of public affairs, as it is at present the contrary.—De Rep. l. i. p. 347. Ed. Steph.

³ Id. l. viii.

⁴ Tac. An. l. iv. c. 6. Suet. Vit. Tib. 66, 69.

"said

“ said to live happy, whom another may kill with-
 “ out guilt, and even with glory’.”

¹ In M. Ant.

IN the history of Roman tyranny, there are frequent examples of persons dragged from a banquet to the tribunal, and thence to the place of execution. The most trivial actions were objects of censure; for instance, only to celebrate a festival, while the emperor happened to be indisposed, was judged a capital offence; and an elegant author was condemned to die, only because, in some of his writings, he had called *Brutus* and *Cassius* the last of the *Romans*. When *Tiberius* had devoted any person to death, he began by depriving him of all offices and public employments, and this was understood as the signal to prepare for death. Every friend of the obnoxious person was a partaker in his misfortune, and an aged mother was put to death merely for weeping over her murdered son. Tac. Ann. l. vi. c. 18. Id. Hist. l. iii. c. 38. Id. An. l. iv. c. 34. Ib. l. iv. c. 68. Ib. l. vi. c. 18.

*Objectum est poetæ, quod Tragædia Agamemnon probris laceffisset. *** Viginti uno die abjecti tractique sunt: inter eos pueri & fœminæ. Immaturæ puellæ: quia more tradito, nefas esset virgines strangulari, vitiatæ prius a carnifice, dein strangulatæ. Mori volentibus vis adbibita vivendi.* A part of the above is too shocking to translate. Suet. Vit. Tib. c. 61. I omit mentioning the extravagancies of a *Caligula*, a *Nero*, a *Domitian*, as they appear rather the effects of frenzy than of systematic oppression, and confine myself to the usual effects of tyranny. Perhaps, indeed, as a modern author has remarked, these actions, horrid as they appear, were necessary consequences of the apprehensions and passions, which it is the nature of despotism to excite in the soul of the tyrant. See Suet. Vit. Cal. c. 27, 28, 30. Vit. Ner. c. 26, 33, 34, & passim. Id. Vit. Dom. c. 10, 11, &c.

These

These will nevertheless be found to fall short of the instances of eastern despotism. From the fourth emperor of the Turks, I do not recollect any that ascended the throne without being defiled with brother's blood, and scarcely any who died a natural death. *Selymus I.* dethroned and murdered his father, strangled his brother, and, afterwards repenting, put to death fifteen of those who had betrayed his brother into his hands. The five brothers of *Amurath III.* were strangled in his presence, and his mother through grief immediately stabbed herself. *Mahomet III.* began his reign by the murder of his brothers, and the wanton sacrifice of all his father's concubines.

If the reader should be yet enamoured of despotism, he may consult *The History of the Bastile*, *Linguet's Memoirs of the Bastile*, and *Addison's Freeholder*, N^o 10.

E S S A Y X.

OF THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALS.

Of Self-interest.—Sympathy.—Religious Belief.—Whether or not the latter be essential to Virtue.

THE general principles or motives of virtuous action, are, *refined self-interest, the sympathetic feelings, and religious belief*. The first of these directs us to avoid whatever injures our health or private happiness; nay, to the well-informed mind, exhibits very powerful arguments in favour of the social duties. Though it was by no means allowed by every sect of philosophers, that virtue, independent of externals, was all-sufficient to temporal enjoyment and felicity; yet none of them disputed, that vice was in itself sufficient to produce misery, and never failed to produce it¹. Thus temperance, prudence, fortitude, frugality—and indeed, if we respect the tran-

¹ The Stoics affirmed virtue to be the *only good*; the Peripatetics, the *chief good*.—Cic. de Off. Diog. Laert. Vit. Arist. p. 320.

quillity

quillity of the mind as a source of happiness, a freedom from violent and criminal passions, rank among the immediate dictates of that self-love, which acts under the guidance of reason in the pursuit of its proper enjoyments.

More extended views display to us the connection between social and private happiness. Actions profitable or prejudicial to society, are so to individuals, as members of society. It would be for the interest of monarchs, as well as of the people, if wars were less frequent; the general or the king who is for the present successful, may in a course of time expect a reverse of fortune. Villany may thrive for a while; and yet a man may owe his ruin to that very species of villany, of which he himself afforded the example. The vicissitudes of life, which may reduce the prosperous to the situation of the sufferer, furnish a common and a potent argument in favour of the general exercise of mercy and compassion¹.

¹ Ου της κρατύλης χρεη κρατειν ἂ μη χρεων,
Ουδ' ευτυχελιας ευ δοκειν πραξειν αι,
Κ' αγω γαρ ην ποτ' αλλα νυν εκ εμ' ετι,
Τον παντα δ' ολβον ημας ες μ' αφειλετο.

Eurip. Hecub. 282.

To be virtuous on the principle of refined self-interest, demands not only a very extensive, but a nice and philosophical knowledge of things¹. The man who is intelligent in moral science, as far as it is founded on this principle, must know the bounds and measure of the several passions and pursuits; he must know wherefore, and in what, each virtue is estimable; for each virtue has its proper and specific reward annexed to it, and these are the ingredients of earthly felicity².—Thus the proper consequence of public spirit is fame; of innocence, content; of generosity, love. To imagine riches and prosperity, or that species of enjoyment, which riches are supposed to confer, as naturally attached to these virtues, is the common error of the vulgar³; for prudence and industry are the virtues which must accomplish those more sordid ends. On these reasons, the Stoics defined virtue to be a life in all respects conformable to the dictates of nature and truth. Socrates was accustomed to execrate those, who disjoined the honest from the profitable, even in thought; and virtue being actually founded on a perfect knowledge of

¹ Arist. de Mor. l. iii. c. 9.

² Id. l. x. c. 7.

³ Πλῆτει δ' ἔραδιον τὸν ἐλευθερίον, μὴτ' ἀληθικὸν οὐτά, μὴτ' φυλακτικόν.—Arist. de Mor. l. iv. c. 3.

moral truth, it was a maxim of the ancient world, that only the *really wise* could be the *really good*¹.

Another source of virtuous action, and which has been more particularly insisted on by the moderns, is *sympathy*; and indeed this principle seems essentially necessary, in order to engage us immediately in behalf of our fellow-creatures. The effect of sympathy upon the human heart may be compared to the action of light upon the optic nerve: it transfers the picture from without, and seats it in the soul. By exciting all the feelings proper to the suffering object, it gives us the most perfect conception of his misery; causes us almost to forget our own situation, and fancy ourselves the sufferers². Though it is probable that this principle is no other than a

¹ Arist. de Mor. l. vi. c. 13.

² "Who," says the pathetic Lactantius, "can be in affliction, without hoping for the compassion and the aid of others? This is the affection," adds he, "by which man is distinguished from the animal creation. It was given us that we might, by mutual assistance, remedy in some measure the imbecillity of our nature; and whoever would deprive us of it, would reduce us to the condition of brutes."

———"Mollissima corda

"Humano generi dare se natura fatetur,

"Cum dedit lachrymas."—— Juv. S. xv. 131.
modification

modification of self-love; yet, as its effects are instantaneous, and habit reduces it to a kind of secondary instinct, experience justifies us in the distinction between this source of benevolence, and that which is an act of reason, grounded on any principle of interest.

Sympathy is not improperly termed a *moral taste*; and, like taste in the fine arts, will admit of improvement by reason and cultivation. The sense of danger, frequently excited, strengthens our antipathy to vice; and the sense of utility increases, by a common effort of the mind, the love of that moral beauty, which we learn to be profitable to us. In very refined persons, sympathy proves a fruitful source of virtue; but, in common minds, its operations are feeble and uncertain: for, as the sympathetic feelings may be increased by proper cultivation, so they may be almost annihilated by false reasoning, by being conversant with scenes of cruelty, or even by neglect.

Reason then furnishes us with a rule of conduct, founded on the consideration of our real and permanent *interest*¹; and *sympathy*, by a kind of instant inspiration, prompts us to those bene-

¹ Οὐκ εἰν' ἡδὺς ζῆν ἀνευ τῆ φρονιμῶς καὶ καλῶς καὶ δικαίως· οὐδὲ φρονιμῶς καὶ καλῶς καὶ δικαίως ἀνευ τῆ ἡδύος.—Diog. Laert. Vit. Epic. lib. x. 132. 140.

volent actions, where self is not immediately concerned.—“ But, if this be the case, why are religious motives superadded? If these principles be sufficient of themselves to the production of solid virtue, the necessity ceases of a divine revelation; and we must acknowledge the whole to be an imposture, or that the Divinity has exerted himself in vain.”—That reason is the first principle of moral virtue in man, none but a fantastical enthusiast will presume to deny. That simply to *believe* the doctrines of religion is an act of reason, is evident; for unless, upon rational grounds, we be assured of their truth, what mean we by saying we believe? The fact, with respect to the belief of Divine revelation, is this: When sufficient evidence of its authenticity has been advanced, reason finds *the whole* agreeable, accepts *the whole*, establishes the several precepts as *parts of an agreeing whole*. That reason could have established for herself a law equally perfect and agreeable, by no means follows; or that Divine revelation is unnecessary, because it comes in aid of principles already implanted in us by the hand of nature. But a more particular view of this part of the subject will probably be useful; and those, to whom it may not be immediately necessary, will, I dare believe, not find it disagreeable.

I. The understandings of the generality of mankind are not sufficiently exercised to pursue with accuracy that nice and refined series of abstract reasoning, which demonstrates the connection in every particular between social and private happiness. The moral feelings of men are seldom delicate enough to discern the superiority of intellectual above sensual enjoyments, and a directing hand is wanted to influence their choice. But RELIGION resolves the principles of virtue at once into *the will of God*; and the mind which is incapable of examining the nice distinctions, the complicated relations of abstract reasoning, is immediately able to comprehend the simplicity of a command, and to connect with the idea, the punishment or reward annexed to its breach or observance. It is confessed by *Aristotle*, that the pure beauty of virtue can never be generally felt; and that no speculative theory of morals can ever have sufficient influence with the vulgar¹.

II. The moral notions may be perverted. Errors in reasoning, like false calculations, will produce errors in practice; and the passions themselves will not unfrequently play the sophist. Not only our appetites and inclinations,

¹ *Arist. de Mor. l. x. c. 10.*

but

but our judgments and our wills, are in a measure dependant on the temperature of the blood, and on the state of the nerves. We are not the same in youth as in old age, in sickness as in health : and, too frequently, when we imagine we are pursuing reason, it is only a phantom equipped by passion to assume her likeness. We may resolve, for the present, that certain principles are right, in conformity with reason ; and at a future period we may resolve the contrary. In the hurry of action we may want leisure to debate the question as it ought to be debated, and be involved in error and misfortune before we have opportunity to form a reasonable determination. But when, from full, clear, satisfactory evidence, we have accepted a law as divine ; when we have determined that this law shall stand the *unalterable rule of our conduct* ; we are no longer at liberty to deliberate on the expediency of particular precepts ; we must adhere to the whole, or throw off our allegiance to the whole ; and that is not so easily done, when we have once been fully satisfied of its divine authority.

III. In respect to those virtues or vices, the reward or punishment of which depends upon the judgment of the public, the natural consequences are prevented by the same imperfection and instability of reason that causes wrong elec-

tions in individuals. The love of fame is properly a virtuous motive; but how often is the good report of the world better obtained by a well-acted hypocrisy than by the most exalted virtue¹. "Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice." I am far from asserting, that the successful villain is happier, nay I should be sorry to think him so happy as a good man in a much humbler station; but these appearances must considerably weaken the force of that motive to virtue, which regards only its utility in this life, and must consequently tend to mislead the judgment.

IV. I would not answer for it, but that men destitute of *religion* might find excuses for the worst actions, in the *end* which they propose from those actions, grounded on the plea of *utility*. By some act of injustice, for instance, which breaks not violently on the order of society, a man may enrich himself, and live in affluence all the remainder of his days. In this case, if he be certain of escaping punishment, there is no immediate interest to withhold him. He will do violence to the sympathetic feelings, it is true; but, perhaps, those feelings may not be very strong in

¹ See this subject treated in a masterly manner in the second volume of *Bishop Hurd's* truly elegant and philosophical sermons.

him,

him, or may, for the moment, be silenced by the predominance of a stronger passion. But we may suppose a case where the prospect is not entirely selfish. A man supposes he would be an able and an upright king; and because he thinks that by assuming the government he may be of great benefit to the nation, he kills an innocent monarch, and usurps the throne. Another, to compass some design really meritorious in itself, invents and propagates a falsehood.—But what says religion?—*Thou shalt do no murder: Thou shalt not lye*—and he must be a poor moralist, who does not see how dangerous it is to afford any latitude to the human passions, in allowing them to trifle with those laws, which are essential to the good order and happiness of society, whatever the occasion or excuse¹.

Thus liable to illusion and perversion is human reason; thus impotent is sympathy in combating the vicious passions and propensities: nor is the proposition without melancholy illustration in the history of nations as well as of individuals. *Religion* alone stamps an uniformity on the character and conduct, which is derived from principles established by that GREAT BEING, who is *always the same, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever*.

¹ Arist. de Mor. l. iv. c. 13.

My present business is not to enter upon a defence of religion against all the attacks of the sceptic; it was only necessary to explain its connection with morals: but I cannot help remarking, that a very forcible argument in favour of the truth of revelation, results from this consideration—Since it is plain that human virtue would be very imperfect if unsupported by religious principle; and since men would then be deprived of one of the most powerful motives to the accomplishment of the moral duties; it follows of course, that the Deity would not fail to manifest his will to mankind, unless we suppose him wanting either in power or benevolence.

E S S A Y X I.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS ON THE ATHEISTICAL SYSTEM; AND ON THE MORALS OF THE ANCIENTS.

(BEING A SEQUEL TO THE PRECEDING ESSAY.)

Chain of Reasoning which conducs to Scepticism.—Consequences to which it leads.—Chain of Reasoning from Atheism to religious Belief.—The Question discussed, How far Christianity contributed to the Refinement of Morals?—Morals of the Ancients.—Evils introduced with Christianity.—Speculative Morals of the Ancients.—Socrates.—Plato.—Cicero.—Cursory Observations on the Tenets of the different Sects of Philosophers.

IF the thinking *sceptic* will be at the pains minutely to examine the tendency of his opinions, he will probably find that there is no mean between Christianity and Atheism. The first doubt, I believe, which startles the half-informed mind, respects the probability of those miracles, which religion adduces in support of its authenticity. The creatures of habit, we cannot easily assent to what is out of the usual course of things so long detailed to our senses.

Because Providence is uniform in its operations, we are apt to suspect something of a positive law; nor do we always discern a reason weighty enough to justify in our eyes those astonishing deviations from the general uniformity. When he has proceeded thus far, the *sceptic* begins to question the necessity of all *revelation*; nay, the possibility of it. If *revelation* be false, he loses the best assurance of a *future state*. The disbelief of a *future state* levels at once all the moral attributes of the Deity, who appears at least an *incomprehensible Being*. A *Being incomprehensible*, when we are once in the custom of bringing all things to the test of our senses, is not very different from *no Being at all*. Here he commences *atheist*; but finds, though he has hitherto eluded the difficulty of believing what he could not easily comprehend, he has not finally escaped it. Something yet remains to be accounted for—the *visible creation*; and by what means it has been called into existence.—There are only two solutions to which he can resort; *the eternity of the world*; or *the fortuitous concourse of atoms*. Unfortunately, the very recent period in which civilization commenced, and *the late invention of arts* (arts which could not have remained undiscovered during an eternity) destroys the one hypothesis;

hypothesis¹; and the manifest design and order of each part of creation undoes the other.

The chain of reasoning, which conducts again to humility and truth², is the reverse of this. If we suppose a CREATOR, a first cause of all things³, we must suppose him *intelligent*. If *intelligent*, we cannot suppose him *indifferent to the creatures he has formed*; for to what purpose create a world, of which he is afterwards to have no care⁴? If *he is not indifferent to his creatures*, since the nature of his existence, and the excel-

¹ To believe that mankind have existed from eternity, and yet so very lately emerged from a state of total ignorance and barbarism; or to believe that ever the arts and sciences could be universally known, and yet totally lost, so as no traces to remain, requires a more capacious *faith* than to believe all the impostures that false religion has ever invented.

² “ Since by a little smattering of learning, and great conceitedness of himself, he has lost his religion; may he find it again by harder study, and an humbler mind.”—Dr. Bentley, Phileleuth. Lips.

³ Προς τας επιζητητας, πη γαρ ιδων της θεως, η ποθεν κατειληφως οτι εισιν, ητα σιθεις; φερων μιν και οφει * εργατοι εισιν. επητα μεντοι εδε την εμαυτη ψυχην εωρακα, και ομως τιμω. ωτως ην και της θεως, εξ ων της δυναμειως αυτων εκασοτε πειρωμαι, εκ τωτων οτι εισι καταλαμδανω, και αιδεμαι.—Anton. l. xii. 28.

⁴ Τα των θεων προνοιας μεσα. Τα της τυχης εκ ανα φυσεως η συλλωσεως, και επιπλοκης των προνοια διοικουμενων.—Antonin. l. ii. c. 3.

* In their works.

lence

lence of his works, speak him *beneficent, he will promote their happiness by all reasonable means.*

Thus the *moral government of the DEITY* is admitted; and if we once admit that *the DEITY interferes in human concerns*, I see no reason to dispute any one instance of this interference recorded in the *Scriptures*.

If the infidel declared war only against his Maker, we might safely leave to the Almighty the vindication of his own authority and attributes. But when the sophistry of scepticism sports with the morals of the community, the matter then becomes a human concern; when we find that the aim of every writer, who bends his force against religion, is to undo some of the most salutary principles of moral duty.

In the last Essay I endeavoured to prove, in general terms, the moral uses of the Christian revelation. It is perfectly consistent with the design of these Essays, to inquire, in the second place, how far it appears to have contributed to the civilization of mankind. Why should we capriciously substitute the effect for the cause, and attribute to science and refinement what is due to Christianity¹?

¹ See this topic treated with uncommon eloquence, and with sound but unaffected erudition, in a volume of sermons published by the present bishop of London. Sermon. xiii. p. 311. & seq.

Nations not much inferior to us in the mathematical, physical, and political sciences, have tolerated actions at which our moral feelings revolt. We have already seen, that human sacrifices were common among the ancients¹; and I fear the practice continued even after considerable advances were made in civilization. If the people, if the vulgar are less prone to sanguinary and absurd superstitions than they formerly were, it is not to be ascribed to the progress of free-thinking, since it seems to be allowed on all sides, that the multitude never can embrace a system of speculative infidelity. The ferocity of the ancients in *war* is well known. The polished Athenians were not superior to the cruel customs of the times². The Romans, after victory, seldom spared either sex or age³; or if any were spared from the sword, it was only to devote them to slavery⁴: and this severity was never

¹ Essay I.—The Germans, the Persians, the Thracians, all sacrificed prisoners of war. Three youths were sacrificed by the Athenians before the battle of Salamis.—Tac. Ann. l. i. c. 61. Herod. l. i. c. 86. Id. l. ix. c. 118. Plut. See also Liv. Dec. 3. l. ii. f. 57.

² See some shocking instances, Thuc. l. iv.

³ Tac. Ann. l. i. c. 50, 56.

⁴ At plundering Tarentum, 30,000 men, women, and children, of all ranks, were sold.—After the defeat of Persius,

never relaxed till the promulgation of Christianity. It is true, we are not without instances of great depravity in modern times; but those which I now adduce were established customs, and perfectly conformable to the religious as well as political institutions of the nations of antiquity. The detestable practice of selling or exposing their children; the miserable condition of slaves, who might be tortured or put to death for their master's crimes, are indelible blots upon the morals of Paganism. Theft was permitted among the Spartans.—The youths of that republic might, for sport and wantonness only, fall forth and murder as many of the miserable Helots as they pleased¹; and the action was not only attended with impunity, but with honour. Unnatural passions were universally prevalent; nor were they punished or restrained by the laws of any nation upon record. Add to these, the abject condition of the female sex, and polygamy: and let us recollect that most of these vices were tolerated by the most refined nations; but by the Christian law are absolutely prohibited, and soon after its establishment disappeared,

thus, 70 cities were sacked, and 150,000 persons made slaves in one hour.—Alexander sold the citizens of Thebes. Plut.

¹ Plutarch.

“ But

“ But did not Christianity introduce evils at least equal to those which it reformed—superstitions, animosities, priestly tyranny, and religious persecution?” I answer, if such vices were inculcated in the gospel, there would be some ground for the complaint. But at a time when the gospel was wrested from the hands of the people; when it was neither known nor read; when the idolatry, the polytheism, and most of the ceremonies and rights of Paganism, were revived under the name of Christianity; we are not to wonder that a religion, the *name* of which was only known upon earth, was destitute of force and efficacy to restrain the corrupt passions of men. As soon as the *spirit* of Christianity was revived, and its real doctrines were published to the world, by permitting the gospel to be generally read, these errors and delusions were no longer revered. If the modern world is not reformed by a pure religion, we may, I am convinced, without want of charity, retort the sneer upon our adversaries, and attribute a considerable part of that depravity, too observable in the higher ranks of life, to the spirit of infidelity which is gone abroad, and to the neglect of initiating the rising generation in the principles of true religion.

Should

Should it be replied, that, in depicting the manners of antiquity, I have dwelt only on the vices of the vulgar; and that the sages of the ancient world professed and taught the most perfect morality—I must confess myself unable to find in any of their writings the so much boasted system of morals. However accurately they may reason on some of the common affairs of life (though even here they are not free from error); when they have occasion to treat of the sublimer principles and ends of human action, we find in them only scepticism and anxiety, obscurity and contradiction. While they recommend the practice of certain duties, they are destitute of a motive adequate to the enforcement of them; I mean the certainty of a future state of rewards and punishments. Their morality is indeed without a solid foundation; and on that account, notwithstanding some sublime and animated touches of sentiment, they seem, as Lactantius said of Zeno, only to dream about virtue.

Socrates felt more than any man the weakness of the human faculties, because he possessed such as enabled him, better than any other man, to judge of their extent. He saw both the necessity and the probability of a revelation; and breathes a pious wish to be a partaker in its benefits.

nefits¹. Yet Socrates had his doubts ; and perhaps his scepticism and his fears suggested the desire of more substantial information.

Plato, who, in a well known dialogue, has reasoned with much ingenuity on the immortality of the soul, on other occasions is found to sink the discovery in the dark abyfs of a mysterious metempsychosis. He is one moment a zealous advocate for all the popular fables ; at another, he breathes a purer strain, and (imperfectly, it is true) asserts the unity of the Godhead. The great principle on which he builds the chief of his morality, as well as his policy, is false and impossible² : it is no less than a community in all possessions whatever, even in wives and children. By this project, were it possible to reduce it to practice, all the delicate ties of kindred and domestic affection would be dissolved ; chastity and shame would be no longer virtues ; and mankind would exist, like a herd of brutes, in indiscriminate lust. There appears indeed a manifest want of system in the philosophy of Plato. It is a composition of inconsistent materials ; of the mysticism of Pythagoras, the scepticism of Socrates, and the superstition of Egypt, with now and then an extraordinary ray of sublimer truth.

¹ Plat. Alcib. ii.

² Rep. passim.

The comprehensive genius of Cicero was benighted in the shades of doubt. In no two of his tracts does he appear the same. He was distracted by the disagreeing opinions of philosophers, and a want of evidence to support the doctrines which his love of virtue led him to admire. We find him at some times a strenuous supporter of the superstition of his country¹; at others, not only attacking the popular opinions², but apparently dubious as to the existence of the *Supreme Being*³. He has declaimed, with his usual eloquence, in favour of a future state⁴; but in his familiar correspondence he doubts, if not denies it. Death he more than once styles the end of sense and perception, the final consummation of all things⁵.

His moral system is hardly more settled than his theological opinions. His humanity (which we must confess was great) could not emancipate him from the absurd and barbarous prejudices of his time, the ideas of savage glory and a right of conquest⁶. His philosophy did not exalt him

¹ De Harusp. De Leg. l. ii. c. 13.

² De Div.—Lact. l. ii. c. 3. ³ De Nat. Deor.

⁴ De Senect. Somn. Scip. &c.

⁵ Ad Fam. l. vi. ep. 3, 4, 21.

⁶ See, in all his writings, his enthusiastic encomiums on the unjust usurpation of the Romans, and see them confirmed by his own example.—Ad. Fam. l. xv. ep. 4.

to that principle of unaccommodating virtue, which studies *not to please men but God*¹. But, what is most deserving of censure, this most accomplished orator is not ashamed to appear, on some occasions, the professed apologist and advocate for lewdness and debauchery².

Socrates, as well as the *Stoics*, placed the supreme good in indolence and apathy³: the tribe of *Cynics* extended further this destructive prin-

¹ Ad. Fam. l. iv. ep. 4.

² Verum si quis est, qui etiam *meretricibus amoribus* interdicitum juventuti putet, est ille quidem valde *severus*. Pro M. Coellio.—Mr. *Hume*'s morality is not of a much purer strain than that of the *Roman* orator. "The amours and attachments of Henry IV. during the civil wars of the League, frequently hurt his interest and his cause; but all the young, at least, and amorous, who can sympathize with the tender passions, will allow that this very weakness (for they will readily call it so) chiefly endears that hero, and interests them in his fortunes."—Enq. con. Prin. Mor. f. 7.

By the above representation I mean not to cast any reflections on *Cicero* as a man; I would only expose his speculative errors. It has been too much the little policy of the present age, to emblazon and make public the failings of great characters; but such conduct, though it may flatter our self-love, is really detrimental to virtue. With all his errors, *Cicero* was both in principle and practice, perhaps, the first of the Heathen moralists; and we may justly say with Lactantius, "Quis enim veram viam teneret, errante Cicerone?"—Lact. l. iii. c. 15.

³ Επὶ τῇ τυχῇ ὡς καλλίστῃ κτήματι.—Diog. Laert. Vit. Soc.

ciple, and preferred a mendicant and shameless life to useful labour and domestic enjoyments. A community of wives was a favourite doctrine with both these sects, as well as with the *Platonists*¹. The disciples of *Pyrrho*, arguing from the discrepant practice of mankind, affirmed that there is no such thing as any fixed or certain principles of morality; and in this they were imitated by the *Academics*². Not to mention the shameless debauchery, which was recommended both by the precepts and example of *Aristippus*, or the pernicious and detestable opinions of the *Epicureans*, even the *Stoic* system, which was the glory of the heathen world, abounds with tenets reprehensible and false. The sympathetic feelings, compassion and social affection, were proscribed; suicide was represented as innocent, if not indeed meritorious; and the great author of this illustrious sect apologized for obscenity, and asserted that incest and sodomy were no real crimes³.

If errors or imperfections equal to these be found in the Gospel system of morality, we will calmly resign it to the censure of its enemies. What then is the conclusion to be deduced from

¹ Diog. Laert.

² Ib. Vit. Pyr. Laët. l. iii. c. 5, 6.

³ Sextus Empir. quoted by Dr. Bentley, Phileleuth. Lips.
& Diog. Laert.

these

these remarks? Not, that those excellent persons, who in the times of religious darkness reflected so much honour upon human nature, were vicious in themselves, or that their natural reason was inferior to ours; but that they erred for want of that light and information, which some of us are so ungrateful as to despise: they sighed anxiously for that treasure, which we possess only to prove ourselves unworthy of it. If *Socrates*, if *Plato*, if *Zeno*, or if *Tully* had been educated under the influence of Christianity, would they, can we suppose, have rejected its truths for the blindness of Paganism? Would they have ranked with the *Bolingbrokes* and *Voltaires*, with that nameless herd of triflers, who affect to reject or to ridicule revelation? Would they not rather have embraced the philosophy, and imitated the conduct, of a *Milton*, an *Addison*, a *Newton*, and a *Locke*?

* The learned and excellent Bishop of Landaff, in his volume of Sermons and Tracts, with which he has lately favoured the public, records an anecdote of Sir Isaac Newton, which he had from Dr. Smith, author of the celebrated Treatise on Optics, and late master of Trinity College, Cambridge:—"I find, Sir, said Sir Isaac, addressing Dr. Smith, more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible, than in any profane history whatsoever." Sermons and Tracts, p. 286. N.

E S S A Y XII.

OF RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENTS.

Inquiry, Whether the Clergy ought to depend for Subsistence on the Benevolence of their respective Congregations.—Whether the Laity ought to chuse their Teachers.—Of Bishops.—The Influence of the Crown in the House of Lords.—Errors in our Church Establishment.

THE liberal scheme, which proposes to place the teachers of religion dependant on the will of their respective auditors, would certainly be an excellent test of the piety, as well as the generosity, of the laity. It would effectually rid us of a multitude of atheists and free-thinkers, who are at present numbered among professing Christians. It must be confessed, however, that it would throw some temptation in the way of the dissipated and avaricious, to secede from the worship of the Deity.

It must be confessed, too, that if the regular clergy were in this manner to be annihilated, the interests of learning would be likely to suffer. But, after all, we are not to suppose there would be a dearth of preachers. As long as there remained some tincture of religion among men, there

there would be occasional fallies, which, if not edifying, would be at least entertaining. The aspiring cobbler, when instigated by the spirit of enthusiasm, of avarice, or ambition, would ascend his stall; while his opposite neighbour in the tub would expose a different assortment of theological wares to the best bidder. Each would infallibly damn the hearers of the other; and their rhetoric would have *fire* and *energy*, the want of which, in the compositions of the pulpit, is at present so much complained of. It is, however, to be feared, that they would find it to their account to conform a little to the taste of their auditors; and it would probably contribute to the increase of their collections, if they would promise the kingdom of heaven to thieves, drunkards, and adulterers.

To be serious—We are indebted to the Christian religion for an institution, which has contributed more, perhaps, than any cause whatever to the information and moral refinement of mankind. The schools of ancient philosophy, from the great expence of attending them, were shut against *the poor*^{*}: and even those who studied

^{*} Hippias the Sophist relates, that at Sicily, in a *very little* time, he made upwards of 150 minas (484*l.*) by his public oratorical exhibitions.—Plat. Hip. Maj. p. 282. Steph.

there, contemplated the social virtues rather with a view to scholastic refinement than to practice; rather in a political and interested light, than as matter of positive obligation, and derived from the Author of Nature. But the institution of a well educated body of teachers, authorized by the state to explain in public the duties of morality, and to enforce them by every argument which can interest the passions or the hopes of men, is certainly an improvement in *police* (to call it by no more assuming a title) which ought not to be disregarded, in our researches into the causes which have operated for the civilization of mankind.

The question is not, whether we should be left totally without religion, if the arm of civil power were to withdraw its support; but whether a pure, a rational, a moral religion, would continue to exist? Whether men, if left to themselves, would contribute to the maintenance of such a body of public teachers as I have been describing; or, if some would even consent to support teachers for themselves, whether they would be equally ready to support them for others? In plain terms, whether the kingdom of heaven, the knowledge of it at least, would not be monopolized by the rich, in exclusion of the poor, to whom it was originally preached? However ardent men may be in the support of new opinions; however the first professors

professors of Christianity might be actuated by zeal, or by inspiration; is it to be supposed that the generality of mankind, the vicious, the unthinking multitude, would long continue to sacrifice avarice to virtue? It would then be their *interest* to be professing infidels; and even those, who might still retain some little sense of religious awe, would apply to whatever quack would administer to their salvation on the cheapest terms. The fervor of piety, or of *emulation*, which now engages them to vie in decency and order with the established church, would abate in the sectaries themselves; and some, who ungratefully wish the overthrow of the church, would be buried in its ruins. Rivalship, in every department of life, is the source of excellence; and where that rivalry is with established laws and ordinances, it serves effectually to restrain those eccentricities, and that caprice, to which human nature is liable, even in what respects religion.

If, in a word, the teachers of Christianity were to be thrown upon chance for their subsistence, who would be disinterested enough to spend a youth of study, and an age of care, without reward, distinction, or even competence? If the majority of the people were to be exempted from contributing to the support of religion, is it probable that a virtuous minority would be long

able to withstand the torrent of vice and ridicule? Undoubtedly the Deity might work a miracle in support of his religion; but I believe no rational person would wish to see the experiment tried; to see men tempt God by their indolence, their avarice, their folly, and presumption.

‘ But allowing that all should be compelled to contribute to the support of some form of public worship; is it not a manifest infringement upon liberty, that men cannot chuse their own *preacher*, as well as their own *taylor*?’ I reply, the very act of forcing them to contribute at all, is an infringement upon liberty; and though the vulgar may be competent judges of the abilities of a taylor, we cannot allow them equal discernment in matters of science and erudition. Daily experience may convince us how injudiciously preferment would be distributed by popular elections. The modesty of genius would stand little chance of being distinguished by an ignorant multitude. The most illiterate, the most impudent, those who could most dexterously play the hypocrite, who could best adapt their preaching to the fanaticism of the vulgar, would be the only successful candidates for public favour¹. Thus I have no doubt that

¹ There is no necessity to go far to prove the truth of this assertion; the miserable choice which the public in this metropolis

that reason, moderation, and literature would soon be banished; and a scene of corruption, confusion, and madness would prevail. Possibly, our candid opposers, the *freethinkers* themselves, would find little cause of triumph in the ruin of the church; a favourite superstition might erect its head among the populace, less liberal, less indulgent to the vagaries of modern philosophy, than the present establishment. Possibly, in the flames of persecution, they might too late regret that freedom and tranquillity they so unworthily enjoyed.

Church patronage and preferment in the hands of the populace, would be fatal to religion, morals, and government. In the hands of the crown,

tropolis make, whenever a pulpit is supplied by a popular election, is proof sufficient without any further examination. There are certain chapels where some popular rhapsodist is stationed for the purpose of extracting weekly contributions from those whom curiosity may draw to observe the laborious display of voice and action. Though most of these are under the conduct of respectable persons, and the audiences are in general called genteel, the torrents of exquisite nonsense which are poured forth from these pulpits must astonish any person of common reflection. The fact is, these orators are scarcely any one of them possessed of the abilities or erudition of a schoolboy of the lowest forms, and only support their popularity by stage tricks, which one would hardly suspect could impose on the meanest of the vulgar.

such

such a weight of influence would certainly endanger the constitution. In the hands of the hierarchy, the same influence would not, perhaps, be more safely deposited. That the abuses of *lay patronage* in the presentation to livings are great, I am willing to confess; but on a candid investigation I am of opinion, that it is an evil which may be palliated¹, but which admits not of a radical cure.

‘But the authority of the church may be lessened, and its dignity reduced, without any immediate detriment to the cause of religion. It is inconsistent with the humility which becomes the teachers of Christianity, to sit and rank with the peers of the realm.’ This is a favourite topic of declamation with politicians of the inferior order. But let me ask them, is it really a grievance in their eyes, that, in the midst of a trifling and dissipated age, a few men of character and learning should have seats in one of the public councils of the realm? Is it really a grievance, that erudition or piety should receive some marks of respect and distinction, or should be of some little consequence in the legislature? Is it a grievance,

¹ The late decision against general bonds of resignation, is a glorious check upon the venality, knavery, and oppression of lay patrons.

that

that the influence of religion should be diffused through every rank ; or that a few of its professors should be enabled to associate with the superior orders of society ?

Those of the bishops, who are not selected from illustrious families, are in general men who have been distinguished for their learning, or other eminent qualities. As for such of them as are of noble descent, why are they not as fit to be seated in the House of Lords as their elder brothers ? And let me tell my opponents, that it is of some use to society, that even *one* of a great family should receive a *religious education*.

When did the bishops indicate an inclination to persecute, or act in opposition to the dictates of candour and moderation ?—‘ But the bishops increase the influence of the Crown in the House of Lords.’ Some of the most sagacious politicians, and whose aversion to tyranny is as unquestionable as that of those who make the objection, assure us, that it is essential to the liberty of the people, that the Crown should possess an influence in the House of Lords ; and that whenever it ceases to possess it, a civil war will be the consequence, or the aristocracy must devour the other branches of the constitution. But what is this mighty influence which the Crown derives from the votes of the bishops ? In the first place, the attendance

attendance of the bishops is by no means regular ; I believe, during the whole course of the late war, never more than *ten* voted with the ministry, very seldom more than *six* or *seven*, and *two* at least always against them : a tremendous majority ! Secondly, Some of the bishops want and expect no preferment ; and with which of the lay lords is this the case ? Thirdly, Many of them are connected with noble families, with whose influence they rise or fall ; and, if biassed, they are most likely to be biassed by their friends and relations. After all, those politicians, who declaim so fluently on the influence of the Crown in the House of Lords, seem to forget that the House itself is the *creature of the Crown* ; and that while it lies with the Crown to throw in as many new peers as it pleases, all other means of restraining its influence must be ineffectual¹.

The

¹ In the Essay concerning the Theory of Government, the reader would probably expect to find some branch of legislative authority equivalent to that of our Upper House. The truth is, I apprehend the British constitution to be a more simple fabric than is generally imagined. Much has been said upon the subject of a *mixed government*, and our ears are familiarized to the sound ; but in reality the only legitimate and effective branches of *government*, are the *representatives* of the *people*, and the *first magistrate*, who is possessed of the political and executive power.

The

The inconsistency of those, who under the colour of liberty would undermine the established constitution of this country, in church and state, is in nothing more conspicuous than in this: While they so strenuously assert that it is the natural and indefeasible right of every citizen to possess a share in the legislature, the best educated, and consequently, one would suppose, the best qualified, body of men in the kingdom, is the only body particularly marked to be excluded that privilege; as if it were the design of Christianity to divest its professors of all the common rights of men. If the bishops are to be expelled the House of Lords, let the rest of the clergy be eligible into the House of Commons; and let them, equally with the laity, be capable of being called by the royal prerogative to temporal peerages. What great advantages would the enemies of the church reap by such a reformation?

The House of Lords is, however, not without its uses. It is a moderating power, which acts as a great council to the sovereign, and restrains the excesses of popular councils. It affords a milder mode of interposing a negative, than if directly given by the sovereign himself. It is also of use in holding forth honorary and titular rewards to those subjects, who may be superior to lucrative motives, to engage them more fervently in the service of their country, or to diminish occasionally the violence of faction.

It

It may be proper, before I dismiss this topic, to remind the reader, *that to the bishops this nation is indebted for the salvation of its liberties civil and religious, at the most alarming crisis that ever threatened their extinction.*

It would be no less than the grossest of bigotry, to pronounce that the church establishment needs no improvement. But the error is not, that the clergy have too much authority and respect; but that they have not enough of either to render them essentially useful. If the clergy were less numerous, and in general better provided for, the good effects to religion would be presently experienced. In those parts of the kingdom where they are in a state of indigence and dependence, religion derives no advantage from their numbers. The minister sinks beneath the level of his flock; and they eye him with contempt, instead of looking up to him with reverence. The literary accomplishments of clergymen, in those inferior stations, are but too frequently on a par with their preferments; and the ignorance, meanness, and rusticity of some of the body, bring down indiscriminate ridicule on the whole order.

It was the Papal policy, when the church aimed at universal dominion, to multiply its ministers. At the Reformation the revenues of
the

the church suffered a considerable defalcation; but the number of the secular clergy was not diminished, and the fund was inadequate to their proper support. Some reasons might be urged in favour of this circumstance at the Reformation, which do not at present exist. It was necessary, perhaps, that the clergy of the church of England should be numerous at that time, in order to counterbalance and guard against the influence of the Romish priests. The value of money was much greater than at present; and the liberality of devout persons supplied, in some measure, the deficiency of the ecclesiastical revenues. Yet, at so early a period as when Hooker wrote, we find that able apologist urging the great numbers of the parochial clergy, and the small provision that some of them must necessarily find, in excuse for the ordination of unlearned persons; the income of some benefices being so small, that no persons regularly educated could be found to accept them. Since the time of Hooker, the numbers, and consequently the evils, of the clergy have increased; for non-residence, and the almost universal practice of employing assistants, have introduced a much greater number of indigent, and I fear unqualified, persons into the church. It would therefore, undoubtedly, considerably improve our ecclesiastical

ecclesiastical police, to reduce the numbers and better the condition of the inferior clergy; first, by uniting small livings, where it may be conveniently done, so as to create a sufficient maintenance for a resident clergyman; and, secondly, by ascertaining, by a positive act of parliament, the stipends of assistant curates, and in general proportioning them to the value of the living. Such an arrangement would prove a more effectual mean of securing the residence of the beneficed clergy, than any penal statutes or canons that could be devised. As to the admission of unqualified persons into holy orders¹, it is matter of astonishment that the universities of this kingdom have never taken it into their consideration; their immediate interest, as well as

¹ If I am not mistaken, since this Essay was first published, a very salutary resolution has been entered into by the Right Reverend Bench, not to admit any candidates for orders, who are not graduates of one of the universities. A regulation such as this promises undoubtedly to be of essential service, in excluding mean and illiterate persons.—To make it, however, really effectual to that purpose, and to exempt the bishops from the irksomeness of solicitation, and the odium of refusal, it ought to be confirmed by *act of parliament*. To enter for not quite three years, at some of the colleges, can be no great hardship on any person to whom it can be an object to enter into holy orders. N.

the interest of religion, being materially concerned¹.

¹ In a work published some years ago, by Dr. Priestley, concerning the corruptions of Christianity, I have remarked some errors, which, as they immediately concern the subject of this Essay, and have not been noticed by the Doctor's theological antagonists, I esteemed it a duty not to suffer to remain unanswered. In doing this I flatter myself, that Dr. Priestley himself will have the candour to believe me actuated solely by the same love of truth which he professes: where no personal intercourse or connexion has subsisted, there can be no cause for personal animosity; and no man, who is acquainted with the very slender obligations which I am under to the church, will suspect me of acting under the influence of a bribe.

1. It is certainly either a very hasty assertion, or a very inaccurate mode of expression, to alledge, "That the legislature of this country has thought proper to *impose* a mode of faith upon the people." That no man is under the necessity of professing the established religion, Dr. Priestley is a very strong and a very striking instance. That the majority of a nation has a right to levy a general tax for the support of any institution, which they may judge essential to good morals, is perfectly consistent with Mr. Locke's, and consequently with Dr. Priestley's principles of government, who professes himself a disciple of Mr. Locke.

2. But Dr. Priestley is particularly offended with the civil magistrate interfering in matters of religion. Now, if any authority or controul be requisite, let me fairly ask him with whom would he lodge this controuling power? Not certainly with any single churchman; for that would be at once establishing a papal jurisdiction, which would be rather more inconvenient than our present constitution.—To

councils,

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councils, Dr. Priestley is not much more favourably disposed: besides, even councils would require some supreme authority to convene them. With whom then could this power so properly be entrusted as with the collective body of the legislature, united with all the principal persons in the church? This objection, therefore, does not apply to our establishment in particular; if there is to be any establishment, there must be some controul and authority, and this controul is certainly in better hands in this kingdom than in any other state in Christendom. If Dr. Priestley had not been too hasty in determining concerning the laws of the realm, he might soon have satisfied himself, that the *whole* power of reforming the church is not vested in the crown without limitation.

3. Another objection of Dr. Priestley's, which applies immediately to the subject of this Essay, is against the distinction of orders. He endeavours to prove, that the Christian church was originally served by elders (presbyters) and deacons only. For the sake of order, however, he admits, that in any business which concerned the whole society, one of the elders was made president or moderator in their assemblies: that the first change in the constitution of the church was making the most distinguished of the elders a constant president or moderator, and appropriating to him the title of Episcopus or Bishop. He accounts for the extension of the episcopal authority, by observing, that when the number of converts became too great to assemble in one building, they erected other places of public worship; but considering these not as new and distinct churches, but as branches of the old one, in order to preserve the connexion with the mother-church, they did not appoint a new bishop, and the bishop of the mother-church by these means became a diocesan bishop, whose elders and deacons presided in the separate and dependant churches. Now
supposing

supposing we were to grant the whole of this, though I think we can hardly place the apostles, or even such distinguished persons as Timothy, Titus, &c. on a level with all the common presbyters; but allowing the whole of it, does not Dr. Priestley see something here like connection and system from the very beginning?—Does he not see further this general maxim confirmed, that as a society increases and grows bulky (so essential is subordination to good order and government) it requires a proportional extension of that power, which was necessary for its regulation when contracted within a smaller compass?

4. I am sorry to add, that the Doctor's arguments against the support of the clergy by tythes are equally trite and unworthy of their author. Every estate or inheritance in this kingdom, which is either purchased or descends to another, is transferred subject to this incumbrance of tythes; so that if any hardship ever existed, it existed only with respect to the proprietors of land at the time the tax was first laid. Every farmer rents his farm subject to this incumbrance; he knows that such a tax is to be levied, and allowance is made in all contracts in which land is concerned. How liable to sink with the value of money, how unequal, how incompetent a provision for the clergy any general tax upon land (as Dr. Priestley proposes) would be, may be easily understood by the present state of the land-tax in this kingdom. What injustice to the farmer, what discouragement to improvement, to rate all land alike; and what injury to posterity to estimate the future value of land by its present condition! These are really the crude theories of speculative men, which serve to disquiet and confuse the minds of the people, without the least probability of being reduceable to practice.

5. Dr. Priestley is also too hasty in asserting, that it is not *simony* to purchase the next presentation to a living, provided the living be not void at the time. In answer to

this, I shall only beg leave to refer the Doctor to an author, who is in almost every person's hands, and whom he ought to have consulted before he hazarded this rash assertion.

“ By the statute 12 Ann, s. 2. c. 12. If any person for money or profit shall procure, in his own name or the name of any other, the next presentation to any living ecclesiastical, and shall be presented thereupon, this is deemed to be a simoniacal contract; and the party is subjected to all the ecclesiastical penalties of simony, is disabled from holding the benefice, and the presentation devolves to the crown.” Blackst. f. 32. c. 18.

The words of the statute itself are still stronger against any such distinction as Dr. Priestley supposes; and every clergyman, on being presented to a benefice, solemnly makes oath to the same effect, and is liable to be prosecuted for perjury, if he swear falsely. That benefices are frequently thus corruptly transferred, I am sorry to be under a necessity of believing; but the law cannot properly be blamed, because some persons chuse to oppose its authority, or to evade its force.

6. Another mistake Dr. Priestley might have as easily corrected.—“ In this country, the Annates (first-fruits) were transferred to the crown in the reign of Henry VIII. and so they *continue to this day*, except that small livings were released from this burthen in the reign of Queen Anne.”—This is surely an unpardonable inaccuracy. If the Doctor had only cursorily examined Blackstone's Commentaries, he might have found, that by the statute 2 Anne, 11. the whole of the first-fruits, as well as the tenths, were appropriated to the augmentation of poor livings.

7. Dr. Priestley, after enumerating the ~~fast~~ and festival days appointed by the church of England, adds, “ In so little

little esteem are they held by the more enlightened members of the church, that when any reformation takes place, no doubt but a considerable retrenchment will be made in this article."—Why they should be held in little esteem, I own, I am at a loss to understand. No observance that serves to recal the people to a sense of religion, and to remind them of their duty to God, is in my opinion to be despised: nor is it easy to see what mischief can arise from the celebration of divine service on a few solemn days throughout the year out of the ordinary course of worship, especially since none are compelled to attend but such as have leisure and inclination. N.

These officers are they held by the more enlightened members of the church, that when any religious place is closed, the considerable remuneration will be made in this office. — Why they should be held in this office, I own, I see as a loss to the church. The objection that there is need for people to a state of religion, and to remain there of their duty to God, is in my opinion to be despised; we have only to the state which can rise from the celebration of divine service on a few solemn days throughout the year out of the ordinary course of working, especially, persons are compelled to attend but such as have leisure and inclination. N.

P A R T II.

E S S A Y I.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS ON THE
HISTORY OF THE FEMALE SEX.

General State of the Controversy concerning the Inferiority of the Female Understanding.—Of the Female Sex in the early Periods of Society.—Indifference to the Sex in the first Ages.—The Female Sex an Article of Commerce.—Remarkable Instance of Female Delicacy in a very early Period of Society.—Slavery of the Female Sex.—Exceptions.—Why Chastity is more esteemed as a Virtue in the Female, than in the Male Sex.—Origin and Abolition of Polygamy.—Of the Schemes asserting an Equality of the Sexes.—Of Domestic Tyranny.—Of Female Education.

THERE are certain subjects of which it is almost impossible to treat, without inducing censure, or provoking resentment. The author, who, in the present age of gallantry and politeness, should assert the mental inferiority of the female sex, would be upbraided by the one party, as the advocate of tyranny, and the slave

of prejudice ; and on the other hand, the courteous knight-errant, who maintains the intellectual equality of the sexes, will hardly escape the opprobrium of a traitor to his party, who perfidiously deserts his post, and fights the battles of the enemy.

In such a case, it will be at least the safest mode of proceeding, to remain contented in the humble character of a mere reporter of facts : to permit the respective parties to plead for themselves, by exhibiting a sketch of the evidence on both sides ; to offend not by hostility, nor disgust by an affectation of authority and consequence.

Those who contend against the natural superiority of the male sex, with much reason advert to the great advantages which they possess in culture and education. The intellectual powers of men, it is observed, are, as soon as capable, excited to action. They are early initiated in the theory of language ; they are compelled to think ; and the stores of ancient literature are unfolded to them, with all the advantages of able preceptors, and the intercourse of the learned. Women are destitute, for the most part, of these means of improvement ; they have no dignities or rewards in the literary professions to encourage or excite them ; they have even to surmount
some

some degree of obloquy and ridicule, if they apply to any branch of science; few of the superior departments of literature are left open to them; and the mathematical sciences, without which some affirm it is impossible to become proficient in reasoning, are altogether prohibited.

On the other side, the advocates for the *male sex* have custom and precedent to plead in their behalf; nor is it easy to assign the reason why all the nobler occupations of the mind should have been monopolized by the men, unless upon the supposition of some original and native superiority, which enabled them to appropriate, and exclusively to possess these advantages.

The truth is, Providence, for the sake of order perhaps in society, seems to have imparted a superiority to one of the sexes. But it may be replied, that this superiority consists only in bodily strength, in a more robust habit, and a certain confidence, the natural result of these endowments. The subjection of the female sex, which is the consequence of our superior force, takes place in the most uncivilized ages, when mental improvement is neither esteemed nor attempted; and the rigour of their servitude is lessened only when mankind have made considerable advances in knowledge and refinement.

To

To a certain period of society, the female sex are far superior to ours in all intellectual attainments. The women of some of the American tribes are the only historians and genealogists, and the only persons who are acquainted with the system of the language. In the South Sea Islands, we are informed, they are more inclined to imitation, are quicker in observing the properties and relations of things, and have better memories than the men¹.

Indifference to the fair sex particularly marks the first stage of society². The passions are then scarcely alive; and the wants of nature are with so much difficulty supplied, that men have little idea of pleasure, further than the immediate satisfying of their hunger. The sensual passions are weak, unless aided by the imagination. These people, therefore, easily resign their women to the gratification of a stranger, who generally sets a much higher value on them than they do themselves, and who, in their estimation, amply repays the obligation by a trifling present. In a state so desolate and joyless, the spirits of the females are proportionably depressed. There are no traces even of that passion, by which they become afterwards so peculiarly distinguished; for

¹ Forf. Ob. p. 420. ² Tac. Ger. 20. Cook's Voy.

there

there is no object to excite an attention to *ornament*, while they have neither a wish nor a hope to please.

In that stage of society, when force is universally mistaken for right, it is natural to suppose, that whatever appears of estimation is made a property by the stronger party. As soon as the female sex are found essential or accessory to the pleasures of life, those who have them in their power, think chiefly how they may make a profit of them. Women are a considerable article of commerce in many parts of the world; and in the new discovered tracts of the western hemisphere, the fathers and near relations let out the favours of their females for hire¹. Chastity is not a virtue in the unmarried women of barbarous nations; such an opinion would be inconsistent with the profit, which a father expects to derive from his children; but as soon as a woman becomes the property of a husband, he consequently expects an exclusive right in her charms. Virginity was not esteemed among the early inhabitants of *Thrace*; but wives (whom they bought as other commodities) were severely guarded². The conduct of the unmarried women in *Otaheite* is licentious in

¹ Forf. Ob. 420. The Theremissians purchase wives from 80 to 100 rubles.

² Herod. l. v. c. 6.

the extreme; but that of the married is directly contrary¹. The Lydian females made fortunes by prostitution²; and we have reason to believe, that in Egypt that practice was far from disreputable.

Adultery was a crime as singular, among the Germans, as its punishment was severe. The guilty wife (her hair, as a mark of ignominy, being cut off) was expelled from the dwelling of the man she had injured; and, stripped naked in the presence of her kindred, she was pursued through the village by her revengeful husband, and beaten with unrelenting severity³. An extraordinary instance of romantic chastity is recorded by Herodotus.—Candaules, King of Lydia, was so much enamoured of his wife, that his vanity could not be satisfied, while her beauties were revealed to him alone. Among the courtiers of Candaules was one of the name of Gyges, to whom he was most attached, and in whom he placed the most unlimited confidence. In one of their private conversations, boasting as usual of the beauty of his wife, the king contended that Gyges could not have an adequate idea of her charms while so much of them was con-

¹ Hawkesworth.

² Herod. l. i. c. 93, 94.

³ Tac. Ger. 19.

cealed by the incumbrances of dress; and to convince him of the truth of what he asserted, insisted that he should have ocular demonstration, by concealing himself in the chamber, where she undressed to go to bed. It was in vain that Gyges remonstrated against the indiscretion of his master; in vain he laid before him the probability of a discovery, and the sanctity and veneration in which female modesty should be held; the king remained inexorable, and Gyges reluctantly consented. This highly favoured courtier was conducted by his master to the place of concealment, and in security and at leisure he contemplated the naked beauties of his royal mistress. In retiring, however, he did not escape the notice of the queen, who immediately suspected the contrivance to originate from her husband, but neither gave the alarm, nor discovered her indignation by any token whatever. The following day, Gyges received a message to attend the queen, and unsuspecting what was to be the nature of the conference, immediately obeyed. The queen briefly explained the reasons, why she had commanded his attendance, and concluded with offering him a choice, either to kill Candaules, and to possess her and the empire, or to die himself: *The man,* said she, *who betrayed and exposed me, must be sacrificed,*

crificed, or you, who have been the witness of my dishonour. Astonished and confounded at the boldness of the proposal, Gyges attempted by every possible means to pacify the anger of the princess; but her plan was too deeply founded to be shaken by the rhetoric of the courtier. She gave him, in fine, to understand, that his refusal was in vain, and that if he persisted, he must not hope to escape. The virtue of Gyges yielded to the plea of self-preservation; he murdered his master, and usurped his empire and his queen¹.

The servitude and abasement of the female sex is so deplorable, in barbarous nations, that the marriage ceremonies of many of them consist only of expressions and actions denoting the entire submission and slavish dependance of the wife, and the absolute authority of the husband². In New Zealand, says Forster, we frequently saw the little boys strike their mothers, while the fathers stood by, and would not permit the mothers to correct their children³. The women in savage nations

¹ Herod. l. i.

² In the Moluccas, the Calipha gives the husband this admonition at the marriage ceremony: "You must not touch your wife with a lance or knife; but, if she do not obey you, take her into a chamber, and chastise her gently with a handkerchief." Forreft's voy. to New Guinea.

³ Forst. Ob. 322.

are the only persons who labour; the men indulging in uninterrupted tyranny and sloth¹.

This general description of the state of women in those early periods of society, it must be confessed, is not without some exceptions. In honour of *Isis*, who had been Queen of Egypt, many privileges were conceded to the women of that country, and even a degree of authority over the husband was vested in the wife². The women there, we are assured by Herodotus, transacted all business without, while the men staid at home to weave; the men bore burthens on their heads, the women on their shoulders; the men were not required to provide for their parents, but the women were: in short, in most respects, they seem to have changed the customs and condition of their sex³.

¹ Aristotle accounts it as a certain mark of barbarism, το θηλυ και δαλον την αυτην εχει ταξιν, and quotes a verse from Hesiod, who reckons up a wife among the common chattels of a husbandman, Οικον μιν πρωτιστα γυναικατε εουν τ' αροτρηα. De Rep. l. i. c. 2.

² Diod. Sic. l. i. f. 1.

³ Herod. l. ii. c. 35. I am sorry to apply the observation to certain of our own countrymen; but there are too many, who, regardless of the manly spirit of their ancestors, are not ashamed to adopt the employments and effeminacy of the other sex, who are frequently reduced to want and prostitution on that account. This evil (especially in case of war) demands the interference of the legislature,

The Lycians took their names from their mothers, and counted their genealogies in the female line. Free-born women marrying slaves or foreigners, the issue enjoyed the privileges of citizens; but it was not so if a Lycian married a concubine, or a woman of another nation¹.

Such instances, however, I cannot help esteeming as almost accidental, and as the fortunate result of the singular virtues and great qualities of particular women: they appear so directly contrary to the usual course of things. Tacitus mentions it as an extraordinary example of degeneracy, even beneath a nation of slaves, that one of the German tribes was governed by a woman². The circumstance, however, was not singular, as the ancient history of this island, and indeed the authority of the same historian, testify. Cartimandua and Boadicea, it is true, did not appear till the Britons had made some progress in civilization, and they seem rather to have been called forth by their uncommon spirit and abilities, and by the aggravated injustice and cruelty of the Romans, than by the customs or circumstances of the times³. A modern traveller found one of

¹ Herod. l. i. c. 173.

² Tac. Ger. 45.

³ Tac. Ann. l. xii. c. 36, 40. l. xiv. c. 31, 35. Boadicea, indeed, in her animated oration, if we may suppose it authentic, asserts, that the Britons had formerly made war under the conduct of women.

the American nations governed by a queen, whom they treated with the utmost respect. The same author mentions other instances, among the Indian nations, of hereditary honours conferred on some of the female sex, for great and heroic actions¹.

The preceding facts will furnish us with a solution of some moral phenomena, which I do not recollect to have seen satisfactorily accounted for. CHASTITY is doubtless a virtue highly estimable and commendable—But why should it be essential to character in the one sex, and not in the other? I apprehend, this *imaginary property* in the female sex, which is claimed by uncivilized people, on the principles of a right by *force* and *occupancy*, will be found the basis of that absolute and unreciprocal right and authority, which the husband asserts over the person and affections of the wife. The refined and rational part of mankind have a more perfect idea of conjugal affection, founded on the mutuality and unity of love; but with the vulgar, the right of *property* is still the leading idea.

When the female sex came to be considered as an article of commerce, they became likewise an object of plunder; and many of the petty wars

¹ Capt. Carver.

among the ancient nations began from incursions, the intention of which was to carry off the women. In the marriage ceremony of many nations, something like an appearance of force is made use of in carrying away the bride.

POLYGAMY is a necessary consequence of this imaginary property. In the first stage of society, when the passion of love is not violent, and the hoarding principle is scarcely awake, polygamy does not exist; but is established in the succeeding age, and is the consequence of the unbounded desire of accumulating the means of happiness. As *parental avarice* began, so probably *parental love* first diminished the slavery of the female sex, in this, as well as other instances. Parents, who had a strong affection for their daughters, would earnestly desire to see them happily situated; and, having sufficient wealth, perhaps bestowed them upon men of inferior condition, whom they could retain in some degree of subjection: or perhaps they might even make terms with wealthy husbands. As polygamy is an unjust and tyrannical monopoly, it possibly might owe its defeat to the spirit of liberty, which generally appears when men have made some progress in civilization; but its total overthrow can only be deduced from the preaching of the gospel.

Though

Though the slavish subjection of the female sex commenced in barbarous ages, and though, as mankind advance in intellectual refinement, those distinctions, which are founded only in corporal valour, are of less account, it is neither probable nor natural, that they should ever be totally abolished. Plato¹, indeed, and other advocates for the equality of the human race, have contended that the female sex ought to participate without distinction in all the employments of ours; that they ought to command armies, and fill the departments of the state. I am of opinion, however, that the good order of society is better preserved by assigning to each sex its proper sphere of action; nor can I esteem the domestic duties less important or honourable than the more active employments.

Even in the regulation of families, so essential to the order and tranquillity of human life does an *unity of government* appear, that a *leading voice* is with much propriety assigned to one of the parties. When a question concerns the *common* interest, a degree of deference and respect should be paid to the sentiments of the husband; but this can never authorize that species of usurpation, which interferes with the personal happiness

¹ De Rep.

of the wife. No law of God or man can warrant us to make a fellow creature unhappy. Of all *tyrants*, the most execrable, and the most to be dreaded, is a *domestic tyrant*. The public tyrant extends his cruelties only to his enemies, or to those, he happens to esteem such; the domestic tyrant torments, with a malignancy peculiar to the human race, the gentle and inoffensive creature, who honours and adores him, and whose felicity is often dependant on his smile. The fury of a Nero, or a Domitian, is of a momentary nature, and is generally satisfied with the life of the object; but the *petty despot* perpetuates his cruelty, puts the victim to a lingering death, and, like the vulture of Prometheus, renews his infernal task from day to day.

In the present state of society, I see no means by which the fair sex may reasonably hope to escape the evils of *domestic tyranny*, but by extreme caution and forethought, in what hands they entrust the future happiness of their lives. Without presuming to lay down a system for their conduct, in a matter of so much importance to themselves, a little knowledge of character has suggested a few hints, which may be serviceable in preventing improper connexions, and which, on that account, a sense of duty will not allow me to suppress.

If

If on any occasion the morals, as well as temper of the party, with whom a connexion is to be formed, ought to be regarded, it is when the whole of temporal enjoyment and satisfaction is at stake. No vulgar maxim has proved more detrimental to female happiness, than, *that a reformed rake makes the best of husbands*. In every instance that has fallen within my observation, the direct contrary has happened. For, in the first place, if the maxim were true, it is far from certain that matrimony will produce a reform. The vanity of an enamoured female may flatter her, that her amiable qualities will effect a reformation; but experience tells us, that the reformation must go deeper than that which is only the momentary effect of an impetuous passion; it must extend to the moral principle, to the whole mode of thinking. A *rake* is but another term for a *sensualist*, which in itself implies the quality *selfish*; he has been accustomed to sacrifice the best interests of others to his personal gratification; and there are more ways than one of trifling with the happiness of a fellow creature. Further, the *libertine* has acquired a *despicable opinion of the sex*, from conversing only with the depraved part of it: and we know that matrimonial tyranny usually originates from a contemptible opinion of the female sex. Lastly, in

marrying a rake, there are many chances to one, that a woman marries a *drunkard* or a *gamester*; and these are perhaps the only vices which are never to be reformed. I might add, that without some notion of religion, morality has but an uncertain basis—and what *rake* would be thought to entertain any respect for *religion*!

I would not have the ladies fall into the opposite extreme, and to avoid a profligate take up with a *bigot*. Religious enthusiasm has a natural tendency to sour the temper: and the fanatic derives his morality not from the mild and equitable precepts of the gospel, but from the rigid and tyrannical institutions of the Jews.

Some caution will be requisite also, in engaging with a man, whose situation obliges him to be much conversant with the vicious or uncultivated part of mankind; or whose *profession* inures him to high notions of discipline and implicit obedience.

Cheerfulness is doubtless an excellent quality in a husband; but *that unmeaning levity, which is ever on the laugh*, is more frequently the effect of *folly* or affectation, than of real good temper. It is seldom that such a man condescends to entertain his wife at home in this manner; his jests are reserved for his companions without doors; a part
of

of his satire indeed may happen to be expended within.

I said it did not appear essential to the happiness and good order of society, that all offices and employments should be in common to the sexes: but this is no argument that absolute *ignorance* should be encouraged in either. If women are not to be leaders of armies, or declaimers in a senate, they are at least *moral agents*, and have a part to perform on the open theatre of life, as rational creatures. There is no positive necessity that learning should make pedants of all who possess it. *Pedantry* is generally the concomitant of little and superficial attainments, not of sound and useful knowledge. If learned women are sometimes justly accused of pedantry and pride, it arises merely from the rarity of the circumstance, and from feeling themselves so much elevated in that circle, in which they are compelled to move: but if there were more ladies possessed of knowledge, I am convinced there would be fewer accused of pedantry. One of the first moral writers of the age observes, that “it is the little policy of weak, wicked, and designing men, to depreciate the female sex, and to represent them as incapable of real virtue and solid excellence. It is easy, adds he, to see their scope. Even authors of great name among the

“profligate have endeavoured to confirm the degradation of female dignity¹.”

There is scarcely any argument in favour of the liberal education of our sex, that will not with equal or superior force apply to the other. *A good education* will often enable them to avoid, and always to bear, the inconveniences of domestic life. It will render them objects desirable to men of sense, who at least promise more of domestic happiness, in a union with them, than the ignorant and the vulgar. It will enable them to be nice and accurate in their choice both of books and companions. It will make them better advisers, better mothers, better members of society. It will remove the necessity of resorting to trifling, perhaps criminal amusements, to pass off time: nor is this an object of light concern; since I cannot help thinking that much of the profligacy of the age may be attributed to the neglect of female education.

‘But *every* woman ought not to have a refined education.’—Neither ought every man. But what possible reason can be alledged against women in the higher ranks of life employing their time and their fortunes as becomes thinking beings? I own, I wish to see seminaries erected for

¹ Knox on Liberal Education.

even the learned education of females. If our modern female boarding-schools are deservedly objects of censure, as theatres of vice and folly; it is, because nothing but frivolous, vain, or pernicious accomplishments are taught there.

It may be said, 'that literary pursuits will intrude too much upon the domestic duties, and the care of their families.'—But are these really made the objects of female education? Do not the shewy and trifling accomplishments usurp the whole attention of their early years? *Music*, whether nature have given them a spark of taste for it or not—and though they seldom afterwards make the least use of it, even to divert an idle hour, which is the only end it can answer—is never omitted; but to acquaint them with *the history of their own species, the nature and grounds of the social duties, of the beautiful, the useful, the becoming of morals*, is not esteemed of the least importance. The years, which are often spent in the frippery and useless parts of needle-work, would serve to acquaint them with *the history of nature*, which would be of infinite service in purifying their minds from *vulgar and superstitious prejudices*. Great pains and expence are bestowed to teach them to prattle a little bad *French*. Their minds are contaminated, and their taste is perverted, by the flippant nonsense of superficial foreigners; while

the dignity of sentiment and solid science of their own writers pass totally unheeded.—In a word, let every thing which is *useful* be taught; let every branch of modern education which is *not useful* be laid aside; and I have not a doubt but the whole system, and every part of it, must undergo an entire revolution.

ESSAY

E S S A Y II.

OF THE INVENTION OF LANGUAGE.

Language not taught to Men by Divine Revelation.—Of a Primitive Language.—Whether or not any Language be the Effect of Art.—Lord Monboddo's Hypothesis.—The Sources of Language.—Of Nouns.—Verbs.—Interjections.—Adjectives.—Adverbs.—Conjunctions.—Prepositions.—Articles.—Of the Inflections of Nouns and Verbs.

PHILOSOPHERS, whose curiosity has not been active enough to overcome their aversion to labour, have been fond of attributing to a *Divine Revelation* THE INVENTION OF LANGUAGE. This, it must be confessed, is a very concise method of evading the difficulty; but since it can only serve to repress the free spirit of inquiry, I hope to stand excused if I profess myself discontented with this pious solution, and, with no ill intention, presume to extend a little further my researches^{*}.

It

^{*} A late excellent writer supposes, but not with his usual sagacity and penetration, that at the creation, the human race spoke some language (whatever it was) by mere INSTINCT, and by the instantaneous teaching of Nature. That they might

It is not enough to say, that we have *no* authority from Scripture for ascribing the invention of language directly to the Supreme Being; we have its authority to assert, that at least a considerable part of the first language was of human production, for *Adam gave names to the different creatures*. Should the miraculous confusion of language at *Babel* be adverted to, I reply, that it is impossible to say what was the nature of that confusion; whether it consisted in the invention of new terms, or in the improper use of the old. The miracle at *Babel* might be only a temporary confusion¹, sufficient to set aside that useless and absurd undertaking: and it is more natural to suppose, that the consequent dispersion of mankind was the effect of dissen-

might (if he please so to term it) *INSTINCTIVELY speak*; or more properly *make a noise*, I will readily grant; since I most religiously believe that they had tongues, teeth, and all the instruments and organs proper for that purpose; but that they should be *INSTINCTIVELY UNDERSTOOD*, is a kind of mystical doctrine not so easy to digest.

¹ This conjecture is confirmed by a criticism of the very learned and judicious Mr. Bryant, who remarks very properly, that שָׁמַע really signifies *lip*, that consequently the miracle was not any alteration in the language, but a failure or incapacity in labial utterance, which, soon after their separation, they recovered.—*Anal. of Ancient Myth.* viii. p. 30. N.

tions*

tions occasioned by having misunderstood each other, than that they could not live together, because they did not all continue to speak the same language.

The origin of language, as well as of mankind, is a subject necessarily involved in much obscurity. The most ancient traditions favour the hypothesis, which derives languages as well as nations from an ORIGINAL OR PRIMITIVE STOCK. A whimsical experiment was made in *Egypt*, by which it was thought to be determined, that the *Phrygians* were the most ancient people. Two infants were taken from society, before they had an opportunity of learning any articulate sound; they were carefully observed, in order to find in what language they would begin to express themselves, and the first word that they pronounced was *ἄεκος* (*bekos*) the *Phrygian* word for *bread*^{*}. The experiment was absurd, the result was probably accidental, and the fact only serves to prove what were the opinions of the Egyptians upon these subjects, and that they favoured the hypothesis of a primitive language. A more decisive argument is deduced from the very striking analogy which has been traced between the languages of nations the most remote from

^{*} Herod. 1. ii.

each other¹. Herodotus, indeed, relates, that even at a very early period, the Scythians and the other nations of the North with the utmost difficulty understood one another, and that the language of one of those nations could only be made intelligible to another through seven interpreters. It is certain, notwithstanding, that many languages appear almost totally different, the radicals of which are, for the most part, the same; and, as there is no reason to suppose the original language very copious at the first dispersion of mankind, the different dialects would be diverging from it, in proportion as new inventions or improvements demanded an augmentation of each national vocabulary.

The hypothesis, however, of a primitive language will not be found inconsistent with the theory, which I shall endeavour to establish; since it is my intention to demonstrate, not only how such a language might be at first invented, but by what means successive alterations might be introduced, both to augment and disguise it.

It is the opinion of a modern author, that a perfect language must be the effect of art, con-

¹ See an attempt at the retrieval of the ancient Celtic; in which the ingenious author demonstrates the very striking analogy between the Celtic and the Greek and oriental languages.

fructed upon certain principles, and abstract reasoning. The Greek he asserts to be this perfect language, and labours with much ingenuity to prove that it was framed by rule, and delivered by its inventors at once complete for popular use. To such a conjecture (for the total want of evidence to the fact leaves it barely such) it may be replied, that to force a language on a people, or to alter entirely, and at once, the dialect of a country, has generally been considered as a visionary project¹; that the many anomalies of the Greek language, though confessedly the most beautiful and most perfect extant, and the number of words which are evidently derived from other languages, make directly against such an opinion; that, in fine, the great number of particles and conjunctions, and the variety in the inflexions of the verbs, of which the second aorist and second future are certainly redundancies, argue, that the Greek is in reality a composition of several different dialects.

But though it be not admitted, that an united body of philosophers could, in the early stages of society, meet and adapt a language to com-

¹ Not less absurd than that of the stupid emperor, who attempted to regulate pronunciation by an edict. Suet. Vit. Claud.

mon use; there is a certain uniformity in the operations of the human mind, which affords an appearance of art, where nature, or occasional convenience, have acted without regard to system. It is remarked that, in those languages which have been least corrupted by a communication with others, the radical sounds are few, and the bulk of the language is plainly formed by composition: there is an appearance of art, because there is an appearance of regularity; but it is the regularity of nature. The means which the philosopher prefers for ease, the savage adopts through the weakness of his reasoning powers. An ingenious projector published a plan, not many years ago, for a philosophical language. His plan was, to adopt a few vowel sounds to denote the *genera*, and the different *species* were to be distinguished by *different modes* of composition. Who would look for the execution of this ingenious and systematic process at Otaheite? Yet such has been in a great measure undesignedly the case. In the language of Otaheite *ai* signifies *to eat*, or to *satisfy the first appetite* of human nature; *eai* signifies to copulate, or to *satisfy another appetite*; *eiya* signifies *to catch fish*, *aiya* to *steal* or *rob*—all of them alluding to the satisfaction of wants and appetites. In the same language *e-wai* signifies
water;

water; *a-vai*, *the foot*: whence we may venture to conclude, that the radical *wai* or *vai* signifies something *beneath* or *under* us. This kind of regularity in composition is the leading principle of the Hebrew language; and, notwithstanding the variety introduced from the different dialects, is very observable in the *Greek*, and undoubtedly induced Lord Monboddo to suppose it a language of art.

In pursuance of what has been premised, and consistently with what is to follow, I will venture to propose it as the basis of my theory, that *language is altogether a human invention*; and *that the progress of the mind, in the invention and improvement of language, is, by certain natural gradations, plainly discernible in the composition of words*. The first men would probably make known their wants and desires, in a great measure, by inarticulate sounds, actions, and gestures; in process of time, particular sounds would be usually annexed to particular ideas; and these sounds would become articulate, by uniting two or more of them together, for instance, the *thing* or *action* with the *manner* or the *time* in which it existed or was performed—Thus *Do* (I give) *DO-DI* or *DEDI* (I have given).

The sources of language are, *first*, *those natural cries, which serve to express pain or pleasure,*

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and

and which generally accompany any strong passion or emotion ; and *secondly, imitative sounds.*

The *primitive* parts of speech appear to be, 1. NOUN, 2. VERB, 3. INTERJECTION. The *derivative*, 4. the *Adjective*, 5. the *Pronoun*, 6. the *Adverb*, 7. the *Conjunction*, 8. the *Preposition*, 9. the *Article*.

I. The NAMES of sensible objects are derived, FIRST, from *those emotions, which the perception of them excites, whether painful or pleasant, and the natural cries correspondent to them*¹. SECONDLY, from *those sounds, which accompany certain actions of nature, and which men, endeavouring to describe, would be induced to imitate*; such are *buzz, murmur*; of which there are numberless instances in all languages, and particularly in the *Greek*². THIRDLY, from *a certain analogy between objects of sight and of hearing*. A CRAGGY rock, or a rapid TORRENT (considered as an object of sight) associate naturally with a broken and harsh sound. Quick and violent motion affects the senses in a correspondent man-

¹ Quibus voces, sensusque notarent.

² The substantive *hoe* seems to derive its name from the noise which a workman naturally makes in using this instrument, the name of which is similar in the Friendly Islands. Cook's voyage, vol. i. p. 392.

ner; and, in describing it, men involuntarily adopt a hasty and violent enunciation, often accompanied with much action. **FOURTHLY**, names, or nouns, are derived *from verbs*. The verbal nouns in the Hebrew language are formed by prefixing or inserting one of the letters h, a, m, n, t, i. The first of them is the definite article, and is in reality the pronoun *this* or *it*; the second I suspect to be derived from the same pronoun, and was probably originally the pronoun *itself*¹, but without the aspirate, for the sake of euphony. The others are frequently inserted, prefixed, or post-fixed, for different reasons, to detail which would lead the reader too far into the minutiae of the language. Participles are frequently contracted into nouns, as *daying* has been contracted into *dawn*. **FIFTHLY**, (in process of time, and when language is considerably improved) nouns are formed from composition, as *daisy* (the flower) from *day's-eye*; *nightingale* from *night*, and *galan* (to sing); with many more obvious.

Compound nouns are frequently formed by means of general terminations, such is the Saxon *dom*, which indicates power or office, as in *kingdom*, &c. *wick*, *rick* or *rice*, also de-

¹ הוּא (hua) whence it is contracted into *he*, or *h*, when added to another word.

notes state, situation, or office, as in *bailiwick*, *bishoprick*, *avarice*, &c.; and *hood* has the same meaning, being originally, according to the opinion of some, expressive of the clerical office, from the part of the sacerdotal garment which goes by that name: of this kind of nouns is *knighthood*, &c. *Skip* or *ship* has a similar signification, and is compounded, as in *fellowship*, *worship*, or *worthship* (*i. e.* a state of worth or goodness), &c. *Craft*, art or knowledge, is another of these common terminations, as in *witchcraft*, &c. Those nouns which end in *er* are said to be formed from *wer*, a man; as *hunter*, *fisher*, &c. The diminutive *ling* is supposed to be derived from an old Saxon word, which signified image; as *darling* or *dearling*, that is, the dear image.

The words expressing the faculties of the mind are all of them taken from sensible images, as *dixn* (*dikê*) judgment, from *dis* (*dis*) and *κλω* (*keo*) to cleave in two. *Fancy*, from *φαντασμα* (*phantasma*), &c. The words applicable to bodily motion also, have generally been applied to the acts of the mind. A *way* has always been used to express the mode of attaining our end or desire; *πορος* (*poros*) and *μεθ'οδος* (*methodos*) were used in this sense by the Greeks. In *Otakeite*, they call the *thoughts*, the *words of the belly*:
a covetous

a covetous man is called *Tabatta-pirrepirre*; and it should seem they had in their minds the idea of narrowness, or *gluing and sticking together*, when they formed the word; for *e-pirre*, we are informed, has that signification¹.

It is highly probable, that, in many cases, common names have been adopted from proper names; or, in other words, the names distinguishing the relations of civil life, were probably at first the names of individuals. Thus, in the first language, the word answerable to our word *father*, was perhaps derived from the name of one of the first fathers of the tribe or family. *Ἀναξ*² (*anax*), *Βασιλεὺς*³ (*basileus*), &c. were perhaps the proper names of the founders of monarchies, as *Ptolemy* and *Cæsar*. In a more advanced state of language, these nouns are formed from the verbs denoting the office or employment, as *Rex* from *rexi*, *Imperator* from *impero*, &c.

The proper names of men anciently related to some peculiarity in their persons or manners, or the place where they dwelt, as *Πλάτων* (*Plato*) to *πλατύς* (*platus*) broad, from being broad-shoulder-

¹ Forf. Obs. 403.

² Without a doubt, from *Anak*, the father of the *Anakims*, Numb. xiii. 28. Joshua xv. 14.

³ According to some Lexicographers, from *Βασίς* and *λαός*.

ed¹. Names are common, in most parts of Europe, originally derived from *trees*, as *Joze de Perreira*, that is, *Joseph* who lives near the *pear-tree*. Men afterwards acquired names from some notable action or occurrence; such was the *agnomen*, and frequently the *cognomen*, of the *Romans*. What *Herodotus* relates of a people who were without proper names², is utterly improbable.

Proper names of countries are commonly derived from the situation or the productions of the soil, as *Europe* from *Eurus* (*Eurus*, broad or extended) and *ωψ* (*ops*, the face or aspect)³.

The names of months in *Lapland* are taken from the plants or animals that appear in them.

¹ Many of the Hebrew names are derived from their employments, as was apparently the case with several of our names. Thus the name of one of Nahor's concubines, *Rhumah*, signifies a cook; *Zimran* is the musician, *Jocktan* the instructor, &c. It is well known, that Isaac is derived from *Itzabac*, to laugh, because Sarah laughed before his birth. The sons of Jacob were all named from some circumstance in their births; and we are not without an instance of a name, which seems to have been given after death: thus *Abel* is supposed to be derived from *Habal*, vanity or nothingness, because he left no offspring. N.

² L. iv.

³ All the early Hebrew names of places are derived from some remarkable circumstance; as *Beth-el*, the house of God, because Abram built an altar there; *Kirjath-arba*, the square city.

In

In *Otabeite*, they are derived from the characteristics of the season. The name of the first month (March) means *hunger* and *want*; that of the fourth month (June) relates to *angling*; the eighth month (October) is named from the *young cocoa-nuts* ¹.

The ancients used sometimes to translate *proper names* into their own language; and hence that diversity of names for the same place or person, which has proved no small difficulty in the researches of the learned.

II. After giving names to sensible objects, words were necessary to signify the *state* in which things exist, whether as *agent* or *patient*, and *how* they act or are acted upon.

VERBS were, I doubt not, invented entirely in the same manner as *nouns*, and most of them, I apprehend, were originally *imitations* of the sounds that particular actions of nature produce. This analogy is still retained in many languages, under innumerable corruptions and variations in orthography and pronunciation.

In the maturity of language, *verbs*, like *nouns*, are formed by composition, as *gain-say*, that is, *to say against*.

III. The INTERJECTION is plainly no other than the simple inarticulate expression of a pas-

¹ Forf. Ob. 506.

sion. *Interjections* were more numerous in the *Greek* and most of the ancient languages than they are in the modern; and I believe they are still more numerous in the very barbarous languages. Their signification, while they remain as pure interjections, is indefinite; but if I am not mistaken, during the progressive state of language, many words, which were originally mere interjections, assume a definite signification; and they prove a fruitful source for the augmentation of language, by thus becoming in time classed among the other parts of speech.

IV. The first ADJECTIVES were probably the names of *substances*, in which the qualities denoted by the *adjectives* were predominant; or some slight alteration of the name might take place for distinction's sake. Thus the usual Saxon termination *ish*, I am persuaded, is no other than the auxiliary verb *is*, as exemplified in the words *roguish*, *sottish*, &c. *Less* denotes want or defect, as *fearless*, *beedless*, &c. *Lic* or *like*, expressive of similitude, is, in modern English, changed into *ly*, as in *beastly*, &c. Adjectives ending in *en*, are evidently compounded of the substantive and the preposition *in*, as *golden*, that is, made in or of gold. *Some* is either the Saxon pronoun *sum*, aliquid, or it is a termination derived from our noun a *sum*, or quantity, as *gladsome*,

gladsome, fulsome, perhaps, somewhat full, &c. Another common termination is *al*, which I believe was originally *all*, denoting the *total* prevalence of a certain quality, as in *comical, fantastical*, &c. ¹

V. The personal and demonstrative PRO-
NOUNS, and particularly those of the second person, seem to have been, in most languages, a kind of *interjectional* words, possibly used by savages even before proper names. It is evident, that using the proper name would not explain their meaning to strangers, at least must render it very ambiguous. We may therefore conclude, that these interjectional expressions usually accompanied some gesture, such as pointing to the object.

The *relative pronoun* is derived from the *demonstrative*.

VI. ADVERBS seem to be principally produced from three sources. First, *From a species of interjection*, denoting an impulse of the mind, as *now, then, here, not*, &c. ² 2dly, *From a com-*

¹ The original sense and reason of these common terminations, or augments, is in process of time lost sight of, and they are blindly applied to words with which they ought strictly to have no connexion. N.

² I speak of the *primitives* of these words, as all the above may be traced into the Greek, through different corruptions and variations.

position of two or three words into one, as *always*, *without*, *together*, &c. 3dly, From *adjectives*¹, by adding a syllable, which serves to denote that the word has changed its state into that of an *adverb*, as *great-ly*, *manifest-ly*², &c. Not that we are to suppose, that the augmentative syllable was originally without meaning; on the contrary, I am opinion, that in all languages it is a contraction of some word that denoted *similitude* or *participation*. Our adverbial augment *ly* was originally *like*, as was demonstrated in the adjective. The most common augment in *Greek*, *ως*, has a similar meaning.

Possibly what are called the *primitive adverbs*, and which I have supposed originally *interjections*, might be traced into other parts of speech. Certain words, which, in the *French* language, are mistaken for *negative particles*, are not properly so; nor is the rule of universal grammar, *that two negatives make an affirmative*, departed from in this instance. *Pas* and *point* have ori-

¹ In *English*, at least, I do not recollect any instance of an adverb immediately formed from a noun or a verb. An adjective or participle is first formed, and from it the adverb, as *socratical-ly*, *apish-ly*, *knowing-ly*.

² *Very* seems immediately derived from *veré* (Lat.). *Well* is transplanted among the adverbs with no alteration.

ginally

ginally the sense of nouns, and were used only to strengthen the negative, as, *Je n'irai pas*, I will not go *a step*.

VII. There are some barbarous languages almost without CONJUNCTIONS. Indeed it is plain that they must have been a very late invention, for a living author has traced most of the *English conjunctions* into the *pronoun* and the *verb*. He demonstrates that the conjunction *that* is no other than the neuter article Ðæt of the Saxons, or indeed our relative neuter *that*. *If* is the imperative Līf of the Saxon verb Līfan (to give). In like manner he derives *an* from Ān, the imperative of Ānan (anan) *to grant*; *yet* from Ġet, the imperative of Ġetan (getan) *to get*; *though* (more properly pronounced by our clowns *thof* or *thauf*) from Ðaþ (thaf) or Ðaþiȝ, the imperative of Ðaþian or Ðaþȝan, *to allow*. *Lest* is the participle Lered of Leȝan (lesan) *to dismiss*¹.

VIII. The PREPOSITIONS might, I believe, in most languages, be traced in the same manner into other words. At least the industry and ingenuity of the same learned writer have enabled him to account in a very satisfactory manner for

¹ See Mr. Horne Tooke's invaluable Analysis of the English language, entitled The Diversions of Purley. N.

the etymology of most of the English particles of this denomination¹.

Many prepositions are evidently formed by composition, as, *between*²; *besides*, that is, *being* or *existing* at the side or near.

IX. The definite ARTICLE, in all the languages with which I have any acquaintance, is formed from the demonstrative pronoun *this*, *hic*, or *ille*. The Greek article δ , η , $\tauο$, may appear to be derived immediately from the relative $ος$; but I think both are very evidently no other than the demonstrative $σλος$, reduced by a kind of contraction very common in words much in use.

The Spanish article *il*, *la* and *lo*, and the Italian, *il*, *la*, are evidently the Latin, *ille*. The French *le*, is apparently derived from either the Spanish or Italian.

¹ I confess I was formerly of a different opinion, till convinced by the unanswerable proofs advanced in the above excellent publication. Mr. Tooke, however, confesses that he is at a loss to account for the formation of some of the prepositions: it is worthy inquiry, whether some of them may not have crept into the English from other languages. Why may not our *at* be the Latin *ad*, which I think is derivable from the Hebrew ער (gnad) from ערר (gnadad) to prop? *In* is the same in Latin, and in Greek *en*, which appears to be derived from one of the participial inflexions of the verb εἶμι, signifying being. *On* might possibly come from the same; $το ον$ is a common phrase in Greek. N.

² *Be* (or being) and *twain* (two).

Our *the* is an easy corruption from *this*. Perhaps in common speech the *s* might be left out before consonants, and the *i* pronounced short, which would reduce it almost immediately to our definite article. The *Lowland Scots*, who continue to speak a dialect of the old *English*, make use of a similar ellipsis, commonly using *the* for the plural *these*.

The most probable etymology of our *indefinite article a* is, that it is a contraction of *any*, as seems to be implied by the form which it assumes before a vowel, *an*¹.

Such appears to have been the origin of the several species of words which have been distinctly marked by grammarians. Those variations in termination, which were adopted in order to denote the states and relations of certain parts of speech, constitute the next object which presents itself for investigation.

The *plural* of nouns is frequently marked by rude nations by a repetition of the singular. I have seen a letter from an African chief to his correspondent in England, during the late war. The

¹ Perhaps this article may be only the Saxon numeral *An æne* or *æn one*; and that it would be more correct to say that *any* is formed from that word, by the common augment *-y*, as from *twain* is formed *twenty*, &c. The numeral *un*, or *one*, is employed in most modern languages for the same purpose.

man had learned to speak and even to write a little English; but, probably following the idiom of his own language, he complains of the merchants, *that they had lately sent no SHIP SHIP, at which he wonders very much, for that they had plenty of SLAVE SLAVE very cheap, &c*¹. I am not able to account for the formation of the plural upon any other principle, than that, on which I account for the formation of the other states or cases².

The terminations, which serve to mark the CASES of NOUNS in the ancient languages, I have no doubt were originally petty words, equivalent to our prepositions, only placed after, instead of before, the noun; and which in conversation, and before the language became stationary in writing,

¹ This corresponds to the practice in eastern languages of expressing *excess* in quantity or number by a repetition of the same word, of which there are many instances in the Old and New Testament.

² In all the languages that I know, the plural of nouns is apparently formed by adding to them the demonstrative pronoun plural. In Hebrew it is manifestly so; in the Greek the two first declensions are formed by adding the pronouns *oi*, *ai*, and *a* to the singular noun; and it is the same in the Latin, which is derived from the Greek. The latter declensions in both these languages seem to have been invented afterwards, and were probably formed by some mode of contraction. N.

being

being constantly added to nouns to denote their states and relations, became, after the invention of writing, part of the noun¹.

This is very strongly exemplified in the Hebrew, in which all the different cases are expressed by the prepositions joined to the noun. The genitive in Greek is formed by adding to the noun the possessive pronoun *os*, or *és* (which, by the way, seem to have been originally two different pronouns², though they are now accounted only different states of the same word). The Latin in this, as well as in other respects, follows the Greek. Our genitive case is evidently the pronoun *his* added to the noun³.

The

¹ This part of my Essay was written long before I had seen Dr. Beattie's Dissertations, as several of my literary friends can testify. N.

² Thus *tu* and *vos*, *ego* and *mei*, are undoubtedly different radicals. N.

³ Dr. Lowth, in his very useful Grammar, objects to this derivation; and observes that our genitive is the Saxon genitive *is* or *es*: this is undoubtedly true.—But how was the Saxon genitive formed? *The earth rests upon an elephant, &c.*—As to the objection that this derivation could not apply to feminines, it is trifling. I have already remarked, that the original use and design of all these augments is soon lost sight of, and they are in a little time blindly resorted to by custom in all cases. The distinction of genders was probably at first observed in the phrases *John his house*, or *Mary her child*; but
when

The distinguishing of the GENDERS by the termination is a refinement much further removed from common practice: indeed, many languages have never arrived at it; nor is it quite impossible that it may have been accidental. This idiom, as I may call it, has its inconveniences. It has led to strange misapplications of gender in the *Latin*; and we find that the *French* language has entirely lost the use of the *neuter*, probably from this circumstance.

The ADJECTIVE in English is only varied in the degrees of comparison. The comparative degree is formed by adding the Saxon particle *er* or *ær* (*prius*, before) denoting precedence. The superlative is formed by adding the noun *est*, which is expressive of high pleasure, devotion, or excellence. I have little doubt but the comparison of adjectives in other languages would appear to be formed in the same manner, could we trace it to its proper sources.

The INFLEXIONS of VERBS originated from the practice of compounding the radical word with particles and auxiliaries: the *persons* were proba-

when in process of time the monosyllable *his* came, by the easiness of the pronunciation to be made a part of the noun, and the aspirate was left out, as in *John's house*, its root was forgotten, and it was generally applied without any consideration of its propriety. N.

bly

bly distinguished by the addition of a pronoun; as is the case in the Hebrew, where all the personal inflexions are evidently formed by means of the pronoun, which, though taken into the substance of the verb, may be distinctly perceived to be the very pronoun itself. The Hebrew is the only language extant, which became stationary in writing at an early period; it is the only language, which bears evident marks of originality, and appears not to have been formed, like more modern languages, of a heap of heterogeneous materials, accumulated from different dialects. In the Hebrew, therefore, we have a perfectly systematical language. There are a few radical words, nouns and verbs, which always consist of three letters, and these are varied by the addition of particles and pronouns. If we were well acquainted with the radical pronouns in other languages, and could trace the progressive steps by which they were corrupted when compounded with verbs, I have little doubt but the position might be proved from them as well as from the Hebrew.

The *personal inflexions* might be dispensed with (as in some barbarous languages) provided the nominative case always stood immediately before the verb; but as this was found to be frequently inconsistent with convenience, as well as with ele-

T

gance,

gance, the inflexion of the verb became necessary, to avoid ambiguity. The *Greek* and *Latin* languages possess greater accuracy in this respect than any I know, which enabled their authors to use greater liberty of transposition, and even on some occasions wholly to omit the *personal pronouns*.

The *personal inflexions* serve to mark distinctly the agent: but there is a more material circumstance to be defined by the inflexion of the verb, and that is, *TIME*; as a thing may exist at one moment in a state different from that which it will exist in the next. But since it would be neither necessary nor convenient always to specify the direct point of time, a few general divisions took place; and these are more or less in number, in proportion as the language was more or less formed when it became stationary in writing.

The general divisions of time, that we know to be capable of being distinctly marked by inflexions of the verb, are, 1. The *PRESENT*, *I am reading*. 2. The *PERFECT PAST*, *I have read*, or *have done reading*. 3. The *FUTURE*, *I am about to read*. 4. The *AORIST* (or indefinite) of the *PRESENT*, of use in general assertions, as, *I read frequently*. 5. The *AORIST* of the *PAST*, *I read* (*redde*) or *did read*. 6. The *AORIST* of the *FU-*

TURE, *I shall read*. 7. The IMPERFECT, *I was reading*. 8. The PLUSQUAM-PERFECT (or the more than perfectly past) *i. e.* was past at a definite point of time, as, *I had read Homer, before I saw Mr. Pope's translation*. 9. The FUTURE-PERFECT (or the after-future) which is to the future what the plusquam-perfect is to the past, as, *I shall have read the book, before you will want it*.

I know no language that distinguishes all these divisions of time by the inflexions of the verb. The *Greek* approaches nearest to perfection in this point; but it has no *present aorist*, and is very incorrect in the use of the *second aorist* and *second future*, which, notwithstanding the apologies of some ingenious writers, I am still inclined to think *redundant*: most probably they may be the antiquated tenses. The *Latin* wants an *aorist* of the *present*¹, a *definite future*, and a *paulo-post-futurum*, or *future-perfect*. In the *Hebrew* there are only two tenses or times, the present, which includes

¹ Dr. Beattie has remarked, that the *Latins* invented a verb sometimes to express the *aorist* of the present, as *dormito, I sleep often*. But, if I am not mistaken, this termination will be found to be no other than a diminutive, to express a less degree of the same thing, as *dormito, I doze or nod*.—
ALIQUANDO bonus DORMITAT *Homerus*.

the past; and the future: the former of these is constructed by postfixing the pronoun to the radical verb, the latter by prefixing it. The reader will see, by the above statement of the tenses, that we have only two inflexions to denote the times, namely, those of the present and the past; the rest is performed by auxiliaries: and after all, it is with difficulty that we avoid confounding the *present* with the *aorist* of the *present*; as in the following sentence, *The wise man exhorteth to good manners.*

To trace the formation of the *Greek tenses* would be very difficult: the *Latin* is a less complex language, and in it we are able to trace them with more certainty. In the auxiliary or substantive verb, it appears that the three principal tenses have been originally different verbs; *sum, fui, ero* (whence I suppose *eram*). The tenses of the regular verbs are evidently formed by compounding these with the radical verb; as, *ama-bam*, in all probability it was formerly *ama-eram*; *ama-vi*, at first it was probably *ama-fui*, which would easily soften into *amavi*; *amaveram*, or *amavi-eram*; *amabo*, or *ama-ro*, corrupted like the imperfect. This species of composition is still more plainly exemplified in what we call the irregular verb *possum*. *Pos-sum*, that is, *potens-sum*; *pot-ui*, or *potens-fui*; *pot-ero*, or *potens-ero*:
the

the formation of the other tenses is evident. The two tenses of our auxiliary, *am* and *was*, appear also to have been originally different verbs. Perhaps the *Greek* augment is derived from the past tense of εἰμι, ἦν, or ἦ; the only difference is, that it is prefixed, instead of being postfixed as with the *Latins*¹.

Besides the circumstances of time, there are two other circumstances of which verbs ought to inform us, and those are, *actuality* and *contingency*; whether a thing really exists, or there is only a possibility of its existence; whether an action be really done, or is only commanded or wished to be done. Hence those inflexions, which are called MOODS (mode or manner of existence), of which all that we have seen are, the *indicative*, the *subjunctive* (or contingent), the *imperative*, and the *optative*².

The INDICATIVE denotes the thing or action as it really is; and is the verb in its primitive state, only subject to the temporal inflexions,

¹ A learned friend observed, on reading this Essay, that in the Coptic language scarcely any terminations vary either from gender, number, or tense: the variations take place at the beginning of words.

² There is properly but one mood in the Hebrew.

I can give no better account of the *contingent mood*, than supposing it formed by the addition of some particle, and a consequent contraction. The subjunctive of the Latins was probably made by adding to the indicative *em*, from the Greek particle *εαν, ην* (*si*, or *if*), as, *amo-em*, *amem*¹, &c. Where there are two forms of conjugation, perhaps the antiquated form is adopted to signify contingencies only. This is evidently the case in our own language; as, Indic. *I am*; Subj. *I be*, or *if I be*. I am inclined to think the *Greek subjunctive* came into use in the same manner.

I have little doubt that what is called the *imperative mood* is no other than a corruption of the indicative or subjunctive, by an iteration of the pronoun, as *amas-te*, which by use came to *amate* or *amato*, and afterwards by ellipsis to *ama*.

¹ There may seem a slight contradiction in the theory of this Essay. I have proved that the generality of conjunctions were originally verbs, and now conjecture that a certain mood of verbs is formed by their assistance. The truth is, the invention of the contingent mood is evidently posterior to the use of conjunctions. Thus I do not think it at all improbable that *εαν, ην*, or *αν*, was an imperative, or some inflexion, of *εαο* (*fino*), and meant *be it so*, *allow it*, as *si* is evidently from *fit*. In process of time, however, the Latin, which is a dialect of the Greek, might borrow this very *ην* to form the subjunctive.

I know

I know but one language that has an *optative mood*. In *Greek* the verb οἶμαι (oimai) anciently signified *to wish*, and it is compounded with all the tenses of the optative mood, as τυπτοίμαι (tuptoimi), &c.

The *infinitive mood* is to verbs what the abstract noun is to adjectives. It conveys a particular idea of the action, which may be generally applied. Thus the idea which the word *whiteness* conveys is, that of some particular *white body*; the idea which the word *to eat* conveys is, that of some animal in the action of eating.

The *Greeks* formed their *infinitive* directly into a noun, by prefixing the neuter article το. The *Latins* conformed theirs to the manner of a noun; and their gerunds and supines appear to have been formed by imitating the cases of nouns, and endeavouring to adapt the verb to their regimen. Thus the verb in the infinitive sometimes represents a nominative case, as, *Scire tuum nihil est*, &c. When the verb stood in the place of the object, they frequently conformed it to the rule of the accusative, as, *Eo amatum*. *Amandi* corresponds to the genitive case of the noun, *amando* to the ablative.

The PARTICIPLES are adjectives formed from the verb, and are probably a late invention. It is

unnecessary to enlarge on them in this place; since I am not writing a grammar, but a sketch of the history of language.

The PASSIVE VOICE is evidently a late invention, and the MIDDLE VOICE a refinement still further removed from common practice, almost peculiar indeed to the *Greeks*. The *passive* in *Greek* is plainly formed by the addition of *εἶμι* to the participle.

E S S A Y III.

OF ALPHABETICAL WRITING*.

Difficulty of the Subject.—Examination of the Hypothesis which ascribes to Divine Revelation the Invention of the Alphabet.—Hobbes's Hypothesis.—Picture-writing.—Simplification of Character.—Objections answered.

OF all human arts, the most curious, and apparently the most difficult of invention, is ALPHABETICAL WRITING. The use of written characters is with tolerable certainty traced back into the hieroglyphic, or picture-writing; but the analyzing of sounds, and the distinguishing and marking of their simple and uncompounded parts, is an effort of human genius which seems above the capacities of men, in those early periods, from which the invention is dated.

It is easy on this, as well as on any other subject, to have recourse to a miracle; but since

* The following remarks scarcely deserve the name of an Essay, and are properly to be considered as addenda to the preceding. They are presented in this form, as being more commodious than that of a note.

there

there is no such miracle recorded in holy writ, this hypothesis can only be esteemed an artifice of indolence, or a chimera of superstition. If the Deity had taught or revealed such an art to mankind, why is it not explicitly noted in that complete history of revelation, which inspiration has handed down to us? The writing on the tables at *Mount Sinai* is not spoken of as a new invention; and if it had been such, and particularly if it had been the immediate act of the Deity, is there the least probability that so important a fact would have been omitted by the sacred historian?

The invention of the alphabet is thought by *Hobbes* to have proceeded from a watchful observation of the motions of the tongue, the palate, the lips, and the other organs of speech. If music was much cultivated, as an art, before letters were invented, one might almost conjecture, that the desire of retaining a favourite piece of music would engage some person of a very nice ear to analyze it, and mark down in characters the variations of the tune: the decomposition of language, and the use of letters, would afterwards prove easy. But we have no evidence to alledge in support of such an hypothesis; and we must look for the invention of an
alphabet

alphabet upon simpler principles, and by more easy and natural gradations.

It has been remarked in these Essays, that the ornamental may be traced into the necessary arts[†]. *Painting*, as a fine art, I have little doubt is indebted for its origin to *picture-writing*, or to the necessity of conveying to distant parts certain representations or descriptions of facts.

In the infancy of language, there were few abstract terms; and even these, being obviously metaphorical, easily admitted of a sensible representation. Since it is not improbable that *picture-writing* might be taught as a science, and generally practised, almost as soon as invented; from the incapacity of some, and the indolence of others, it would necessarily happen, that the figures would frequently prove very coarse resemblances of the realities. Indeed, utility being the only end, the speediest means of making themselves understood would be attempted by all: and it was certainly of little consequence whether the figures were exact resemblances or not, provided they were generally accepted as the marks or representations of things. A few strokes of the pen or pencil, therefore, served to furnish the idea of a *house*, a *man*, or of any par-

[†] Essay I.

ticular *animal*; and thus every word in the language would have a distinct sign correspondent to it, and which served to represent it in writing. This is even at present nearly the case in *China*; there the alphabet is very extensive; or, to speak more properly, the characters are very numerous; as must be the case where the language is copious before the introduction of picture-writing. It is therefore probable that the *Chinese* never would have attained the art of simplifying their written language; and indeed so many circumstances must concur, that the invention, even according to the theory, which I am about to advance, may be pronounced almost fortuitous.

It has been asserted, upon what authority we are not informed, that a vocabulary of *twenty words* is equal to all the purposes of some savage nations[†]. The language of *Otabeite* is said not to consist of more than one thousand words; that of the *Hottentots* is almost destitute of articulation. It is, indeed, generally allowed, that in original languages the radical sounds are few, and the bulk of the language is formed by composition. The radical sounds too are found to be very simple, chiefly monosyllables, and all of them significant.—This account of language

[†] Dunbar's Essays, Ess. II.

appears

appears to be consistent with nature and reason; but if the possibility of it, even in one case, be admitted, it is a sufficient ground for the hypothesis, by which I shall attempt to explain the invention of the alphabet.

Now, supposing *picture-writing* to be introduced into some country, where the language was not copious, and where it remained uncorrupted by an intercourse with other nations; and supposing the *picture-writing* there to deviate into a character like the *Chinese*; there would then be a necessity of using compositions of character upon the formation of a new word, as the *Chinese* do in some instances; for the character by which they express *misfortune*, is compounded of two characters, the one signifying *house*, and the other *fire*¹. In such a language, therefore, each of the sounds, which served to compose the words, being in itself significant; and, as such, having a mark or character correspondent to it; men would easily observe the same sound wherever it occurred; and would represent it, when it occurred in composition, by the character which corresponded to it when alone; and by thus simplifying the art of writing they would be able considerably to lessen the labour of study.

¹ Du Halde, quoted by Lord Monboddo.

Successive improvers, when the idea was once started, would proceed rapidly in simplifying the art of writing. The vowel sounds are all of them words in rude languages; these would be easily discerned in composition, and would soon be disjoined in the alphabet from the several consonants, or powers that serve to vary their signification.

This hypothesis, concerning the invention of letters, is not inconsistent with the best accounts, which are furnished by history. It appears, that the first essays in the alphabetical art were very imperfect, and that successive improvements brought it to that degree of perfection, in which it existed in *Greece*¹. Those traditions, which assign the invention of letters to a particular nation, are not to be discredited; for so many circumstances must have concurred to conduct to the discovery, that it appears to have been almost casual: and the order of all alphabets being nearly alike, is an additional proof, that the art was by all nations derived from the same source.

It may be objected, that, in many rude languages, the words are in general polysyllables; and that some languages, which bear the marks of

¹ See a very curious history of the introduction of letters into Greece, Herod. l. v. c. 58.

original and uncompound languages, are very copious in radicals. To this I answer, that if the possibility (and I believe the probability will scarcely be denied) of a language existing, of which the radicals were simple and few, and which was not copious at the time of the introduction of picture-writing, be admitted; it is sufficient to give to this theory the merit, at least, of a very probable *conjecture*, respecting a subject, upon which, I fear, no evidence more satisfactory can be obtained.

ESSAY IV. OF EDUCATION^t.

How far Education is an Object of Civil Policy.—Public and private Education.—Objects of Education.—Errors in the Treatment of Infants.—Whether any one Mode of Education ought to be generally adopted.—Advantages of Classical Learning.—Schoolmasters.—Choice of Books.—Course of Reading.—Translations.—Exercises.—Versification.—Penmanship.—French Literature.—History, Morals, and Geography.—Arithmetic.—Music and Drawing.—Natural Knowledge.—Theatrical Exhibitions.—Improvement of the Memory.—Tasks.—Employment of leisure Hours.—Course of English Reading.—Purity of Language.—Profaneness and Indecency.—Religion.—Correction.—Quarrels.—Vacations.—Sports and Pastimes.—Universities.

A Modern writer, famous for his attachment to Grecian literature, has advanced, as a *maxim of the ancient political philosophy, that the citizens*

^t The following Essay is only to be considered as affording a few hints concerning the most rational methods of infusing instruction into young minds: I by no means wish for the character of a system-maker on this subject. I do not know any class of books that have done more mischief than the modern treatises on education, especially those of Rousseau, Madame Genlis, and other rhapsodists on the continent. There never has

citizens of a well-constituted commonwealth ought not to be educated as the children of private persons, but as children of the state; and according to public wisdom, not private judgment. The learned author should have added, that it was little more than a maxim in speculation; for, though the fancy of every political visionary, from the days of *Plato*, and probably before, has sported with the subject, ancient *Sparta* and modern *Russia* are the only states in which that maxim has been reduced to practice.

It is evident that seminaries, constituted on the principles of *Lacedæmonian* policy, must form very unwieldy bodies, and must in time become as liable to abuse as every other public trust. But if there were even a probability that the public might, in some respects, derive advantage from the project; it is evident that institutions, which forcibly separate the parent from the child, can only be established on the ruins of those endear-

has been, and I think there never will be, an able person educated according to any of these systems; and it is a happy circumstance, that the inferior ranks of life are not likely to fall in the way of them: indeed, if any thing could reconcile me to Rousseau's opinion concerning the superior happiness and virtue of a state of ignorance, it would be the consideration, that such a state is exempted from the danger of being perverted by such visionary speculations as his. N.

ing engagements which are the principal sources of happiness and virtue in domestic life. Eradicate from the human breast the amiable principles of parental tenderness and filial gratitude, and life will lose more than half its attractions; nor can any abstract idea, such as patriotism, fill the void in the heart. If mankind are to have affections, these affections must have an object; and though the excess of fondness may sometimes produce errors in the management of youth, it is scarcely warrantable to assert, that the systems of *Plato* and *Lycurgus* are not attended with equivalent disadvantages, or that private virtue should be sacrificed to public vanity or ambition.

A milder and more equitable plan of reformation would be, to address the reason and the interests of mankind; to determine, by a complete investigation of the subject, the most eligible plan for the instruction of youth, and to convince, if possible, by repeated recommendations of it: and if fashion could, but in a single instance, be brought over to the party of truth and virtue, we might reasonably hope for a more effectual reform, than could possibly be produced by coercive laws, or by systems which contradict the best instincts of nature.

It has been usual, with most writers on education, to introduce the subject by an inquiry, whether

ther an education at a public school, or under a domestic tutor, is to be preferred. The emulation which is excited, and the knowledge of mankind which is acquired, in a public seminary, are pleaded on the one side; and on the other, the preservation of modesty and virtue. The advocates for public tuition do not scruple to assert (and with much colour of reason) that what is called a private education is too frequently no education at all. They alledge that few children will learn in solitude; that there is an imitative principle in human nature, which serves to give tone and energy to the faculties; that companions in labour take off a great part of its hardship; that boys learn as much from one another, if not more, than from a master; and that, in fine, the domestic tutor generally wants that necessary authority, with which the master of a public school is legally invested.

To the argument, that virtue is preserved inviolate by a private education, they reply, that though the impertinencies and follies of childhood may increase by society, scarcely any of the vices of manhood can be acquired in a well-regulated school; that the virtue which is the effect of a seclusion from society, is a virtue not calculated to be actively useful; that there are many virtues, such as affability, courage, and dispatch,

which youth may fail to acquire by this unnatural confinement; that their ignorance of mankind, and their aukward bashfulness, cannot fail to expose them to the tricks, the temptations, and the ridicule of the world; and that their spirits, as well as their health, must be impaired by a restraint, which prohibits a proper and salutary intercourse with their equals in age and situation.

It must not be dissembled, on the other hand, that there are some serious objections against public schools, on the plan according to which too many of them are at present conducted. They are often established in great towns, to the utter ruin of virtue, as well as of health. The pupils are frequently too numerous for the care of the master to extend either to their morals or their learning. We may add, that young persons are often suffered to remain at school too long; are kept as boys, and indulged in the follies of boys, when they should begin to be men. The remedies for these abuses are obvious; *viz.* a rural situation, and a limited number of pupils. Let the pupil be placed at a seminary so constituted as early as possible, that he may complete his course of school education in a reasonable time; and let his parents, not later than the age of sixteen (if they can afford it), place him under the care of a strict private tutor; and let him under
the

the same controul, if possible, be sent to the university.

Under these limitations, I am clearly of opinion that a public education is on the whole to be preferred; allowing, nevertheless, that there are some dispositions so docile and flexible, that they will acquire erudition in almost any circumstances; and that there are some, which seem even to require the gentler course of domestic tuition, and the shade of retirement¹.

The

¹ While I am on this subject, I cannot help noticing an argument very commonly urged in favour of public schools, because it is an argument on which no real friend would wish to rest their defence; and that is, *that useful connexions are frequently formed there*. The maxim is not only sordid and disgraceful in itself, but may be pernicious in its consequences. It may cause a preference of one public school to another, and may draw an increase of pupils to the most crowded seminary, in pursuit of such visionary projects, to the neglect of more substantial advantages. Granting that there may be on record a few examples of a school connection becoming lasting, let it be remembered, that these examples are noticed because they are singular, and are preserved as extraordinary events. If a boy of moderate fortune be possessed of genius and spirit, he will scorn to play the sycophant; that, alas! is the part of a maturer age, when the honest integrity and simplicity of youth are defaced by the corrupt customs of the world. On the contrary, if such a one be placed among his superiors, instead of reaping any advantage from the circumstance, an evil of a very serious complexion will be almost certain to

The OBJECTS of EDUCATION are *virtue* and *useful learning*. The latter adds to the enjoyment of life, and enables us to acquire its conveniences; and, without the former, these can afford neither lustre nor enjoyment. They are naturally united; how to preserve them so during the course of education is the principal question.

I have heard many sensible schoolmasters complain, *that the tempers and dispositions of children are often irrecoverably ruined before they are sent to school*; and in the few instances where they have been successful in reclaiming them, some years were spent in merely undoing what had been done

succeed. He will endeavour to rival those who are his superiors in fortune; he will infallibly contract habits of dissipation and expence; and will learn soon to exhaust his little patrimony, which, with a proper disposition, would have maintained him much more happily than those, whom his ill-judging parents are so depraved as to envy, and wish him to imitate.

Connections at school are the effects of chance; they may as easily be unfortunate as the contrary; nay, considering the small proportion of good characters in the world, and the other circumstances which favour vicious connections, the balance is much against the pupil in this respect. The boldest and most daring boy is generally the admiration of the school, and as generally the most vicious. The boy, therefore, who is sent to a public school purely with the view of forming connections, may just as probably form one with a highwayman or sharper, as with a prime minister.

by

by the parents. If I am not mistaken, the vices of temper are implanted at an earlier period than people in general are willing to suppose; and many of our passions and our prejudices have their commencement in the cradle. If an infant cries, the over-anxious mother never properly explores the cause, but endeavours to still it by ridiculous and unseasonable blandishments and caresses. I do not know any passion or habit that makes its appearance so early, as a certain malignancy of humour, which prompts us to tease those whom we perceive most interested in our welfare; and I am convinced that this disposition, if not entirely generated, is at least considerably promoted, by the absurd custom of soothing a cross infant into good humour. Parents are little aware what a fund of misery and vice they are accumulating in their children by this false humanity. The faculties of infants are soon in a state to profit by experience; and indeed the superstructure of knowledge is built upon the first ideas or impressions they receive. They ought to be allowed to feel, from their earliest days, the evils of life, that they may learn to endure them. Not that we should fret, or make them unhappy, in order to fit them for philosophers; they would be then as acute in discerning and detesting our cruelty, as they are now ready to profit by our folly; and

bad dispositions of another cast would be the consequence. When a child is uneasy, the real cause of its uneasiness should if possible be removed; but the unmeaning prattle and caresses of mothers and nurses can possibly answer no good purpose. If an infant frets without a cause, by being let alone, it will of itself return to good humour; and if it finds that by fretting it does not attain its end of engaging the attention of others, I will almost venture to promise, it will not repeat the practice: and thus, I have not a doubt, the best foundation will be laid for a superstructure of fortitude and good temper¹.

¹ I find I am anticipated in this part of my Essay by that excellent judge of human nature, Mr. Locke: In his *Thoughts on Education*, s. 111. he remarks, that the crying of infants is either *stubborn* or *querulous*: for the former they should be corrected; of the latter the cause ought to be removed, but you ought not to bemoan them. “It is the duty (adds he), I confess, of those about children to compassionate them, whenever they suffer any hurt; but not to shew it in pitying them. Help and ease them the best you can, but by no means bemoan them. This softens their minds, and makes them yield to every little harm that befalls them; whereby it sinks deeper into that part which alone feels, and makes larger wounds there than otherwise it would.”—I recommend it to the reader to peruse all that Mr. Locke says on this matter. *Thoughts on Educ.* s. 111, 112, 113, 114.

Another

Another vice, which materially affects the happiness of children, and which begins to be inculcated as soon as the senses are capable of acting as vehicles of pain and pleasure, is a *trifling vanity*. The boys at Sparta went bare-foot, and were allowed but one garment in a year¹. Health, as well as decency and economy, was regarded in this institution; but with us, ease, propriety, and health itself, are sacrificed to finery, at a period when finery can administer no satisfaction. With the glare of dress, and the rattle of trinkets, let the pernicious adulation and flattery, which are paid to infants, be prudently banished. Kisses and caresses cannot increase the present happiness of an infant, though they may teach it to expect an attention, which if it do not afterwards meet with, the cup of life is dashed with the bitterness of disappointment.

In the succeeding period of childhood, the seeds of *cruelty* and other vices are sedulously cultivated. The tricks, the mischief, the wanton brutalities of children are esteemed by weak persons as especial marks of spirit and vivacity; but their future life too often demonstrates these to have been the commencement of a depravity, which is destined to bring down the grey hairs of

¹ Xenoph. de Rep. Lac. c. ii. f. 3.

their

their fond and deluded parents with sorrow to the grave. The heart that can feel pleasure in the torture of one of the brute creation, can never be the abode of justice or philanthropy¹. A habit of cruelty shuts the door upon all virtue, public or private; it plucks up every noble and generous feeling by the roots, and conducts to villainy, profligacy, and the gallows. Compassion, generosity, and that unerring rule of justice, to do to others as you would they should do unto you, ought incessantly to be inculcated in children; not to inculcate them is to countenance the opposite vices²; and vices thus introduced meet

¹ Forgive me, reader, if I trespass against the rules of decorum, in introducing myself! But I cannot help esteeming it a duty to mention, that if any principles of benevolence, gratitude, and generosity, exist in this breast, I owe them to the lessons of general humanity which I received in my earliest years from a gentle and compassionate parent, who would never suffer the meanest of the animal creation to be wantonly tortured.

² Nullus enim magni sceleris labor: Hæc ego nunquam
Mandavi, dices olim, nec talia suasi:
Mentis causa malæ tamen est, et origo, penes te.
Nemo satis credit tantum delinquere, quantum
Permittas: adeo indulgent sibi latius ipsi.
Cum dicis juveni, stultum qui donet amico,
Qui paupertatem levet attollatque propinqui;

Et

meet but too general an approbation in the world.

A public education cannot commence too soon. Children may be taught their letters almost as soon as they can speak : if the progress be slow, it is still time gained ; besides that it inures them from the first to a habit of thinking, which is not otherwise easily acquired. The superintendence of infant seminaries is, generally the department of the female sex ; and it must be confessed, that the mildness of female government appears better adapted to the tender faculties of young children, than the harsher authority of our sex. The preceptress of the village ever has been a character highly respectable in the eyes of sensible and candid men.

I am so well convinced of the utility of a SOUND EDUCATION, that I would recommend it to all whose circumstances will admit of it. I would recommend, that, to a certain age, the education for all professions be the same : nor do I see any reason why the female sex should be precluded the benefits of solid instruction. I am convinced that much of the frivolousness and

Et spoliare doces, & circumscribere, & omni

Crimine divitias acquirere, &c.

Virtus post nummos.

Juv. xiv.

Hor.

dissipation

dissipation of the age may be attributed to a superficial mode of education; and I am convinced, further, that the time, which is generally wasted by the youth of both sexes in trifling pursuits, would be fully adequate to the acquisition of real wisdom.

Much has been advanced in these Essays on the natural alliance between wisdom and virtue: and, that a taste for reading and science is of superior efficacy, in the prevention of vice, to the best precepts of morality, inculcated even under the sanction of religious awe, might, I think, easily be proved. Experience informs us how soon the principles of morality inculcated in childhood are forgotten, or accommodated to the prevailing customs of the world; but if a taste for science be acquired, the affections are then fixed upon a rational object; there is no temptation to allure them from the path of virtue; at least the most powerful of all incitements to criminal amusements is removed, the tediousness of life during the intervals of leisure¹.

But why is one system recommended indif-

—————Ni

Posces ante diem librum cum lumine; si non
Intendes animum studiis & rebus honestis;
Invidiâ vel amore vigil torquerere.

HOR. l. i. ep. 2.

criminally

criminate to all, without a proper regard either to capacity or situation ?—I answer, it is a duty incumbent upon parents to give to every child the best advantages in their power. The inequalities and apparent variations in the mental powers, are so many arguments why he ought not to be discouraged, though a child should not at first make a progress equal to their wishes. A few years will serve to make the trial ; and that time cannot be better spent than at school, however slow the progress.

The following appear to be the principal advantages resulting from a CLASSICAL EDUCATION. First, It is the best introduction to the use of reason ; and habituates the mind to labour, at a period when it is scarcely capable of any other labour than that of learning languages. Secondly, It is the readiest way to a knowledge of our vernacular tongue, with respect to etymology, construction, and even orthography. Thirdly, The Grammar of the Latin language is the most regular that I know, and therefore fittest to perfect a young person in that science. Some fantastical reformers have projected a scheme for teaching Greek before Latin, without considering how very complex the Greek Grammar is ; so complex indeed, that I question whether a complete idea of universal Grammar could

could be derived from it, without being previously acquainted with the Grammar of some other language. I may add, fourthly, That to those who write, a knowledge of the ancient languages gives a considerable power over words, by knowing precisely their radical meaning, and the metaphorical changes which they have undergone.

A SCHOOLMASTER ought not only to be well accomplished in the sciences he professes, but he ought to be a man zealous in the cause of virtue; and of so amiable a deportment, as to recommend it by his example to his pupils. Good temper is generally agreed upon as an indispensable requisite in a Schoolmaster; for if he be observed to give way to resentment, all the good effects of his authority are at an end¹. Yet a Schoolmaster may be too tame; for then the boys will be liable to contract habits of indolence or neglect: he should be quick without passion, so as to inspire his pupils with a suitable degree of alertness and industry.—*Taste* is a very important requisite in a Schoolmaster. The soundest grammarian, without taste, will never be able to explore a passage to the heart; and unless the heart

¹ *I would beat you* (said Plato to his boy) *if I were not in a passion.*—Diog. Laert. Vit. Plat.

be interested in the elegancies of classical literature, one great aim of learning is lost, and the jewels are trampled under foot.

It has been objected, that a classical education loses time in acquiring words only, when ideas ought to be acquired. This objection (though in a great measure unjust) would certainly be without any colour of reason, if a plan could be proposed for uniting both these purposes; if by a PROPER CHOICE OF BOOKS we could contrive to store the mind at different periods with such useful, moral ideas as are adapted to its capacity.

The first branch of science that youth is capable of comprehending, appears to be *history*. On the knowledge of facts, all moral reasoning must depend; and facts learned in youth are certainly better retained than those which are acquired at any succeeding period. Young boys are most interested in narrative (indeed there is hardly any other kind of composition that can engage them); and I have generally found them more delighted with true history and biography, if not prolix, than with poetry or novels. The tales of love, and the *minutiae* of private life, do not arrest their attention so much as the adventures of heroes, and the vicissitudes of war. Now, although learning be a business rather than

than an amusement, certainly the more acceptable it can be made to the pupils, the better. On these principles, therefore, I would venture to deviate a little from the common order of school-books, which Schoolmasters are more anxious to select for the purity of the Latin, than for any real instruction or entertainment they contain.

I would not be understood to insinuate, that the acquisition of the language, in the most perfect manner, is not a primary object ; but I am of opinion, with the judicious author of a *Treatise of Liberal Education*, lately published, *that at a time when books are read only to exemplify grammatical rules, purity and elegance are not so much required, as when the scholar is more advanced.* The initiatory books, I apprehend, have little influence in forming the taste ; before that effect can take place, it is necessary to be master of the rudiments, to read the language with ease, and to be able to consider it with something of a critical eye. It may please the vanity of a parent to be told, that his boy is reading *Virgil* or *Ovid* ; and it may answer the master's purpose in a pecuniary view, to encourage this absurd vanity ; but in the mean time the real interest of the pupil is sacrificed. For what can be more ridiculous, than to involve a child, who is yet unacquainted

unacquainted with the literal meaning of words, in all the obscurities of figurative and poetical diction; and, before he has acquired any ideas upon common things, to expect that he should feel and admire the highest efforts of the human imagination?

The books, which I would recommend as proper to initiate children in the learned languages, should be plain prose, simple, easy to be construed, and dispensing such knowledge as is adapted to their capacities. I would lead them by just gradations from unadorned language, and plain fact, to elegance of style, elevation of thought, and more abstract sentiment.

After a few of the dialogues of Cordery, fables, or any very easy Latin, just sufficient to shew them the nature of construing, I think Eutropius the most proper book. It is an abridgment of perhaps the most important series of events which the annals of this globe can produce; it is one of the easiest books to be read, and the style is clear though not elegant. After Eutropius, the young scholar may have an excellent taste of biography in the lives of Cornelius Nepos, which, in point of difficulty, is properly the next step above Eutropius. Justin may be read with the greatest advantage after

the other two: he is not remarkable for the graces of style; but he collects so many useful facts in the history of mankind, and is, as I can testify from experience, so delightful a book to boys, that the advantages to be derived from the perusal of him infinitely counterbalance this objection. If the pupils cannot go through the whole of these authors, the parts which they read may be chosen so as to connect together, and afford them a general view of the progress and termination of the principal states of antiquity. Let them next read the most interesting parts of Cæsar and Sallust, and some of Cicero's orations. A good set of ancient maps ought to be made use of while they are reading history; and thus geography will be insensibly acquired, and more firmly implanted, than by any other process.

Until they can construe such Latin as Cæsar's Commentaries tolerably fluently, without the aid of a dictionary, and have gone at least once through a set of the common school-exercises, such as Garretson's or Bailey's, no other language, not even Greek, should interfere with the Latin; otherwise the memory will be confused by the different grammars. But by the time they have finished the course of reading already specified,

specified, it is presumed they will be capable of undertaking the study of Greek. Their minds also will now be matured, and sufficiently cultivated to relish the charms of poetry, of which the *Æneid* is the chastest and most captivating specimen. To the discretion of the master it may be left to determine, how much of the *Æneid* can be read at school with advantage. Some of the moral Odes; all the unexceptionable Satires and Epistles, of Horace may follow, and a few of the Satires of Juvenal; varying occasionally the course of their studies by an oration of Tully, the Cato Major, the Lælius, or the Offices. Ovid and Terence I will venture to proscribe; the former, because he inculcates licentiousness; the latter, knavery. I know no spirit sooner caught by boys, than that little tricking disposition, that spirit of low cunning, which may be learned from some parts of this author. In the comedies of Terence, the father is often a fantastical or an avaricious fool; the son a profligate; and the servant, who is the cream of the jest, a complete villain. The purity of his Latin, and the delicacy of his style, will not, in my estimation, compensate for the danger which is incurred by the imitative faculties of youth. As for Ovid, there is another objection against him, for he

corrupts the taste as well as the morals: a part of the thirteenth book of the *Metamorphoses* may, however, be read with advantage. I wish much to see a judicious selection, for the use of schools, of all the moral and unexceptionable parts of Horace and Juvenal, which would present us with a most agreeable compendium of moral learning. A few pages might be bestowed upon Ovid, as a specimen of his style and genius.

GREEK is worth the pains of learning, merely as a language; and I question whether any man can be an adequate judge of the structure, force, and harmony of language, who is totally ignorant of it. The true principles of taste also are to be imbibed in their greatest perfection from the Greek writers, whose chastity, perspicuity, and elegance, have never been excelled, and very seldom equalled. In teaching Greek, I would recommend the same gradual process as in teaching Latin. The most proper book to commence with is certainly one of the Gospels. I would myself prefer St. Matthew's, merely because I think it is written in a more agreeable and entertaining manner than that of St. John, which is usually the first book: but this may altogether be left to the master's discretion.

Matthew

Matthew and Luke will be quite sufficient of the New Testament. After these, I would recommend some easy prose; perhaps the picture of Cebes would not be found too difficult. A few of the Odes of Anacreon, if selected with judgment, may be read. My predilection for history inclines me to recommend as much of Herodotus as may conveniently be read. It is the most entertaining book I know, and much solid instruction may on the whole be collected from it. The style is simple and beautiful, with this additional circumstance in its favour, that it is the best introduction to Homer. Some Schoolmasters may prefer the Cyropedia of Xenophon, which is an excellent book, if the boys will not find it prolix. It is almost needless to mention, that the Anabasis is the best of all that author's works. After as much of Homer as shall be thought expedient, it may be of use to dip a little into the Orations of Isocrates, as introductory to Demosthenes, who must by no means be neglected. Of the Manual of Epictetus the master may, if he pleases, make considerable advantage, by taking occasion to explain from it the moral philosophy of the Stoics. Thucydides, as well as Livy and Tacitus, the higher poets and philosophers, must, I fear, be reserved for the university; as no school class can be expected to go through a greater

number of books than those which I have already specified.

By pursuing this plan of reading, I am persuaded the student would reap much more useful knowledge, than by the jumbled, unsystematic method commonly pursued in schools. What, perhaps, he would be most deficient in, would be the Heathen mythology, of the great advantage of which I must confess myself ignorant. In return, he would be master of all the leading facts in the history of mankind; and if history be to ethics what experiment is to physics, he would have laid the best foundation of moral reasoning. None of the advantages of classical learning, in respect to the improvement of taste, would be lost by this course of study; and perhaps the style that would be formed from the authors which I have recommended, would be preferable to the prettinesses that are acquired from reading poets; being formed on the best models of that manly eloquence, which is the proper associate and embellishment of virtuous principles.

I omitted entering into a detail of the manner in which I would have the rudiments taught, because I do not in this respect materially differ from the common practice of schools. Before a boy be put to construe, he should be well grounded

grounded in the ACCIDENCE, perfect master of the declensions of nouns and verbs, as well as the rules for determining the genders, and the formation of the tenses. But I do not think there is an absolute necessity, previous to the reading of any author, to overcharge his memory with a multitude of SYNTAX RULES, of the use and application of which he must be totally ignorant. The *concorde*s, and a *few* of the *principal rules*, will be quite enough for him when he begins to construe. He must afterwards continue to get off a portion of the other rules every day, and must be well exercised in the *grammar* during the whole of his progress.

I agree with Mr. Knox, that to teach wholly by TRANSLATIONS is pernicious. But I must observe, that if with the first and second books which a child is put to construe, no translation be made use of, the master himself must supply the want of a translation; or the pupil must, at the expence of some of his pocket-money, apply to his school-fellows. It is impossible, on the first efforts to construe, to proceed without some guide; or to use a dictionary with that ease and dexterity which are essential to profit. To allow them the assistance of a translation at first, and before they have acquired a little stock of words, is more suitable to the progressive powers

of the human mind. I grant there will be some difficulty to be surmounted when they first lay aside the translation; but this will be nothing like so discouraging as the gloomy prospect of entering upon a language totally unknown, and being obliged to consult a dictionary for every word.

TO WRITE EXERCISES IN LATIN appears essentially necessary to grammatical perfection, and should commence as soon as the pupil has gone through the syntax. On another point I must totally differ from Mr. Knox; for it would be dishonesty to deny, that I do not feel convinced of the propriety or advantage of COMPOSING IN VERSE. Indeed it is somewhat extraordinary, that so ingenious a man as Mr. Knox, should be able to advance so few plausible reasons in support of the practice. That several excellent writers had been accustomed to write Latin verses in their youth, is far from amounting to a proof in its favour; because there is great probability, that those men would have excelled, whether they had written verses at school or not. That to write in verse facilitates and improves our prose, I think admits of dispute. I am sure it cannot answer the end of accustoming the student to perspicuity and precision, or of perfecting him in grammar; and I
apprehend

apprehend it will rather serve to induce a loose and vicious mode of composition, and lead him to attend more to sound than sense. It cannot be denied, that this practice takes up much more time than a common exercise; and if it answer no particular purpose, why waste that time, which might be more usefully employed in the acquisition of ideas? The very mention of *stringing words together without order or meaning*, which is always the commencement, and too often the conclusion, of school versification, implies something ridiculous, if not pernicious. But I will grant that a genius for poetry may receive some improvement from composing in verse when young; whether that be a desirable consequence or not, those who are parents must determine. How few poets are so happy as to succeed! and even when successful, how barren, how uncertain are the rewards of genius! The enthusiasm of poetry incapacitates us for most other employments; nor is the unsuccessful adventurer easily reduced to his sober senses: he contends in the face of poverty, accompanied with contempt; and pursues his itch of scribbling through innumerable disappointments, without even the airy premium of applause.

I have heard it urged further, in defence of these poetic exercises, that they teach boys quantity

fity and pronunciation. But surely they never can be necessary on this account, if the master be only careful from the first to accustom the learner to a right pronunciation; and were not this sufficient, the end would be fully answered by a practice, which I think as salutary as the other is pernicious; I mean that of COMMITTING TO MEMORY SOME OF THE MORAL PASSAGES OF VIRGIL, HORACE, AND THE BEST OF THE POETS. This will serve at once to furnish the mind with words and with ideas; and will implant precepts in the heart, which may be useful through all the different periods of life. If it cannot impart taste, it will improve it. It will infix in the mind the best rules of grammar in indelible characters.

One branch of education, which must be attended to at the same time with the study of languages, is WRITING. This, if a rational method be pursued, will not require much time. *The end of writing is to be legible*, and whatever hand-writing most effectually answers this end is the best. Plain writing, clear of flourishes, and very upright, is certainly the most proper for every station of life, and will remain intelligible longer than any other. It may be learned with less time and trouble, and may be written more expeditiously. I have long been of this opinion,

nion, and was happy to find it countenanced by the authorities of Mr. Knox and Dr. Beattie, as their popularity may perhaps be of weight in correcting the whimsical and unintelligible mode of writing, which has been introduced by ignorant writing-masters. I perfectly agree with the latter, that the writing, which approaches nearest the Roman printed character, is the completest.

It has been already intimated, that a prudent Schoolmaster will be careful not to confuse his pupils by too many branches of study at the same time: to the contrary practice, I am convinced, we are indebted for the number of smatterers and coxcombs emitted annually from the young gentlemen's academies in the neighbourhood of London. The impropriety of one language interfering with another, has been already intimated; and if it be not adviseable to engage the pupil in the study of Greek till he be in a great measure master of Latin, it will follow of course, that till he be perfect in these two languages, his attention ought not to be distracted by any other. A rage for French literature has unaccountably prevailed in this kingdom for upwards of half a century. I hope I shall not be accused of want of candor, if I profess not to see any satisfactory reason for this
very

very fashionable pursuit. As a language, none, I presume, will contend that the French is worthy of admiration; and their authors are much inferior to our own: besides that all, which are worth reading, are immediately translated. If a person is to travel into France, it may be necessary to know enough of the language to support some little conversation in it; but that those, who probably will never see the country, should neglect solid and useful acquirements for it, merely because it is the mode, can only be ascribed to the imitative madness of that numerous body, who never think for themselves. French governesses have been of more prejudice to the morals of the female sex, than all the literature of France could ever compensate. These creatures are for the most part of very low origin, desperate fortunes, no education, and uniformly women of intrigue.—To such the rising hope of an illustrious family is generally entrusted!

The parts of science of which a slight foundation may be laid, while children are employed in learning languages and grammar, and which are glanced at in the course of reading I have just been recommending, are *history*, *morals*, and *geography*; which last, if we would wish it to be retained, must be studied along with history.

ARITHMETIC,

ARITHMETIC, for the reasons already assigned, ought to be deferred till the languages are completely mastered. The minds of the pupils will then be sufficiently strong to encounter the complex science of numbers: nor is an earlier attention at all necessary; for the common rules of arithmetic may be perfectly learned, and even without interrupting their classical studies, in a year, or a year and half at the utmost. Mathematics must, I believe, be left to the university, or a private tutor, as well as logic, criticism, and rhetoric.

Music should on no account be taught at a public school of either boys or girls. Drawing should also be referred to private tuition; and dancing must be reserved to a more advanced period, if the parents wish them to pay any attention to the duties of school.

I will not say, that all KNOWLEDGE OF NATURE ought to be withheld to a late period. True notions of the common phenomena of nature are almost as readily acquired as false ones; and prejudices, grounded upon the latter, cost some pains to eradicate from the memory. But this knowledge ought to be imparted, in general terms, in conversation; or by some easy little book, which may be read at leisure hours: for to enter upon a course of experimental philosophy at school, would be a trespass on time, and would divert the
attention

attention of the students into a flowery track, which would lessen their relish for more laborious studies.

The frivolous taste of the present age has prompted men, in most respects, to prefer the shewy and superficial accomplishments to solid wisdom and the truly valuable attainments of the mind. Nor is it a wonder that dissipation and ruin should be the consequence of an education conducted on such principles. It has of late been held of more consequence to learn how to speak than how to think; and, as was observed when the Roman eloquence was on the decline, it seems to be a prevailing opinion, that if the ornamental parts of oratory be acquired, it is no matter whether the substantial be had or not. I confess that even in what respects the *manner* only, I think the theatrical grimace taught by the modern *face-making* rhetoricians, the very opposite to the *simple majesty* of true eloquence. Agreeably to this superficial mode of proceeding, THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENTS performed by boys have been much in fashion, and have afforded much delight to unreflecting parents. There can scarcely, however, be imagined a custom in all respects more pernicious: for, in the first place, if it taught them to be good actors, I do not know that the acquisition is desirable; but in reality it does not teach
I
them

them to speak well. The mind must be in some degree cultivated before it can understand an author critically, so as to mark the proper emphasis, and the other graces of elocution. Boys, when they act, are obliged to do it just as they are taught, and are more likely to acquire a bad manner from an aukward imitation of their master, than to adopt one agreeable to their own person, voice, and general deportment. This practice too begets a trifling vanity in boys; teaches them to be satisfied with that applause which is reaped without any labour of the mind; in fine, relaxes their attention from severer study, and inclines them to the admiration of foppery and folly. In the last place, the waste of time is an insuperable objection. I have known upwards of two months of the prime of life wasted in preparations for one of those trifling exhibitions, and the attention not only of the performers, but of the whole school, engrossed by it; during all which time the useful parts of learning were neglected, and the boys, I will venture to assert, thrown back not less than half a year in their studies.

If to SPEAK WELL be an object in the education of any young person, let such a foundation of classical taste and knowledge be laid, as shall enable him to understand critically the authors he is to read, or the sentiments he is to recite.

During

During childhood, let some care be taken that he acquire no particular tone or accent, but let him, previous to the acquisition of a critical taste, be taught to read in the plainest and most unaffected manner. And lastly, let him, at a proper season, hear as many good speakers as he conveniently can; and then, if any instructions or critical observations be offered to him, he will be able to judge how far they are adapted to his case. All the good speakers with whom I have been acquainted, have, without exception, been formed in this manner.

The IMPROVEMENT OF THE MEMORY is an object of inquiry in most treatises of education. There are two observations which I think practical and to the purpose, though I do not know that they have been much insisted on in any late publication. First, Let the student never quit any branch of study till he be perfect master of it, and can comprehend it as a whole, as well as in parts. Secondly, Endeavour to link and connect the leading ideas, to class facts, and arrange them under different heads; so that the mind shall be able at one view to recal the outlines of the whole science, and afterwards to pass to the inferior branches, or subdivisions. The antients formed their memories almost entirely by method; and indeed

indeed memory never can be useful without system.

I do not approve of TASKS during play hours. Occasionally to relax the mind, and absolve it from every burden of duty or thought, appears essential to health as well as to happiness, and gives the spirits and the genius free play. I would rather lengthen the hours appropriated to business, than embitter those, in which innocent gaiety and active sport are permitted to alleviate the pains of study. I know not whether habits of confounding business and pleasure, habits of protraction, may not be in some measure the effects of this practice. If a task be set at any time, let it be at night, and then a very short one; or a good use might be made of tasks, by reserving them as punishments for indolence or neglect.

Much advantage may nevertheless be derived from the PROPER EMPLOYMENT OF THOSE LEISURE HOURS which are not dedicated to active sports. A prudent schoolmaster will not neglect the cultivation of our own language, but will encourage a taste for reading, by putting into the hands of his pupils good and entertaining books. As often as convenient, he ought to spend his evenings in the midst of his pupils, while each of them is employed in the perusal of some author suited to his taste and capacity. Let the younger

Y

pupils

pupils be amused with easy and interesting narrative, such as *Pilpay's* or *Cambray's Fables*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and *the stories from the Spectator*. Those who are more advanced may read with advantage the *historical parts of Scripture*, *Guthrie's Geographical Grammar*, a History of England not prolix (indeed I do not know a better than that published by the late *Dr. Goldsmith*, in *a Series of Letters from a Nobleman to his Son*) the *Spectators*, *Guardians*, and *Adventurers*, *Dr. Johnson's Works*, his *Ramblers*, &c. as well as his *Lives*, should compose a part of a school library. I have already intimated how desirable a publication an easy epitome of the history of nature is; and Mr. Knox complains very justly of the want of a biographical work for the use of schools. *Kennet's* and *Potter's Antiquities* ought to be had, as they must be frequently referred to in the course of classical studies. Of the poets, *Gay's Fables*, the works of *Pope*, of *Parnel*, of *Goldsmith*, and the *Satires* of *Dr. Young*, appear to be more calculated for youth, than *Milton*, *Gray*, or the sublimer poets. The morals of youth must be confirmed before it will be prudent to trust them with the perusal of *Swift*, or the dramatic writers.

• *Gulliver's Travels* will probably be read with great pleasure by young boys, and I think they may be read with utility, particularly the *Voyage to the Hounhynims*. N.

In whatever books are selected for the entertainment of the leisure hours of children while at school, they should be as much accustomed as possible to a PURITY of LANGUAGE; nay, even in their conversation, this circumstance ought to be attended to, by reproving any *vulgar* or *cant phrases*, or *proverbial expressions*, and accustoming them to express their ideas from their own stock of words.

PROFANE OR INDECENT LANGUAGE must be prohibited under the severest penalties. Immodest words and lewd authors have debauched many more young persons than the natural force of passion. When a youth feels his delicacy hurt by any gross or indecent expression, there is great room to hope that he will not be very accessible to temptation.

A proper respect for RELIGION and its TEACHERS we may reasonably hope will never fail to be inculcated at every regular seminary of youth; and further, the general principles of Christianity ought frequently and seriously to be explained. But beware of *satiating* young people with *religion*! We ourselves feel how much the mind loaths an employment, when retained too long intent upon it. If I am not mistaken, Lord Bolingbroke used to attribute much of his dislike to religion, to the ill-judged and importunate fanaticism of his pa-

rents; and I have known instances of the same effect. It is absurd to crowd the whole devotion of a week into one day; and I am of opinion, schoolmasters and heads of families would act more wisely to appropriate Thursday, or some other evening in the week, for the purpose of reading sermons, than to pursue the same course of duty through the whole Sunday.

I fear the DISCIPLINE of the ROD may not with any degree of safety be wholly laid aside; but its severest exertions should be reserved for the correction of vice. Among these, LYING, FRAUD, or CRUELTY should never escape. The ideas of justice inculcated in children should be abstract and general; not confined to a single species, but extended to all animated nature; and this not only for the sake of the brute creation, who certainly have this equitable claim upon us, but for the sake of the children themselves. Almost every great principle of morality will apply to our conduct towards inferior animals, as well as towards our fellow men; and if a breach be allowed in the one case, a little sophistry will easily adapt the excuse to the other. In fine, from the correction of every instance of rapine or inhumanity, the pupils will imbibe a delicacy of virtue, which will probably extend to their whole future conduct.

There

There are certain tricks, which are a kind of traps for childish applause, and which go under the general name of MISCHIEF, that ought not to pass without animadversion. If the fair sex are more remarkable for a sense of decorum than ours, it is certainly because their education is more guarded in this respect.

How to behave in regard to QUARRELS, is often a difficult task to a schoolmaster. On the one hand, there is danger of damping the spirits of youth; on the other, of encouraging an irascible disposition. It is, however, a common maxim in all well-regulated communities, that no man ought to be the redressor of his own wrongs. No boy ought on any account to be permitted to strike another; for, if allowed with impunity, this usurped authority will subject the lesser boys to a servitude of the most intolerable kind.

Malicious or revengeful conduct must never escape severe reprehension. But with all this a difficulty arises: How is a schoolmaster to come at the knowledge of faults that are committed out of his sight? For I hold it a false policy to encourage the boys in INFORMING OF EACH OTHER. Perhaps in this it will be necessary to draw a line of distinction. The more considerable vices should be carefully explored and severely punished; but a master ought not to be too in-

quisitive about little faults or mischances, nor too severe upon them when discovered; if he be, it will only excite the delinquents to exert their ingenuity by covering their misconduct with a lye. I have known a habit of deceit originate entirely from the *scrutinizing* and *severe* temper of parents and schoolmasters.

A DISTRICT ought to be marked out about the school, beyond which they ought not to be suffered, during play hours, to wander without leave. They must be carefully kept from the company of *servants* and *low illiterate people*.

The SCHOOL VACATIONS ought to be short. Rather let them be more frequent, than long at any one time. It is hardly to be imagined how much boys lose of what they have learned, during a long vacation, unless they are so fortunate as to have private instructors at home. On the whole, boys are generally happier at school than elsewhere.

Even school-boys should occasionally be introduced into company; and if not forward boys, but humble and modest, they should not be kept at too great a distance. It would be of service, on taking a youth into company, to give him some general instructions beforehand in the rules of politeness, and to observe afterwards how far he has profited by them.

them¹. In the company of each other, they should be warned not to transgress the rules of decorum. A gentleness of manners does not imply effeminacy; it is more naturally connected with a sense of dignity; and the want of it, with meanness and real cowardice.

It is not below the dignity of a preceptor to pay some attention even to the SPORTS and PAST-TIMES of his pupils. In these he may act as an adviser, without making himself too busy, which would destroy much of the pleasure to the boys. He should endeavour to direct them to such plays as will afford the most exercise, and he need scarcely fear that they can be too athletic². Sedentary plays, and those which have any ten-

¹ ————— Purus & infons

(Ut me collaudem) si vivo & carus amicis,

Causa fuit pater hic qui macro pauper agello

Noluit in Flavi ludum, me mittere —

Sed puerum est ausus Romam portare docendum

Artes, quas doceat quivis eques atque senator

Semel prognatos.

HOR. l. i. sat. 6.

————— Infuevit pater optimus hoc me,

Ut fugerem exemplis vitiorum quæque notando.

Cum me hortaretur, parcè & frugaliter atque

Viverem uti contentus eo, quod mi ipse parasset,

Nonne vides, Albi ut malè vivat filius, utque

Ranus inops? &c.

HOR. l. i. sat. 4.

² Leaping with the pole, whipping tops, fives and tennis, all running plays, the manual exercise, and gardening, will improve both their constitution and their spirits.

dency to the spirit of gaming, should be discouraged.

If timely commenced, the course of education recommended in this Essay, may be finished before the age of seventeen. About that age, those who are designed for business will probably be placed out to their respective stations; and I am of opinion, that by this plan of education a youth will be perfectly well qualified for any of the genteeler branches of trade; and will, in all probability, prove a better and more respectable character than those who have been less carefully educated. It is generally allowed by men of business, that book-keeping is learned most completely in a compting-house, and some assert that it can only be learned there.

Those who are designed for the learned professions, will often find it advantageous to spend a year or two, after leaving school, under a private tutor of sufficient erudition and taste, before they proceed to the university. From him they may learn French, if necessary; be initiated in the mathematics, and made perfect in classical learning. The dissipation of the times renders it desirable that every young man of fortune, in the universities, should be placed under the particular care of a private tutor, a man of good sense and strict morals.

Interested and conceited persons have affected

fected to cavil at those most respectable institutions, the UNIVERSITIES of ENGLAND. That they are absolutely without imperfections, would be absurd to affirm. Imperfections they have, some that will, and some that will not, admit of a remedy: among the latter, I fear, we may account those habits of expence, into which the students are too frequently seduced; for it appears an evil unavoidable, where there is such a mixture of persons of all ranks and dispositions. There is, I am persuaded, no academical institution in the world, where so many advantages are enjoyed by the students, as in our universities; as well in able preceptors, as in having access to the best books; in the company of the learned; and in the rewards which are held forth to stimulate industry and genius. Men of ability will be found in all seminaries, nay will sometimes start up self-instructed; but I must acknowledge, that though I have known many dunces proceed from the same quarter, some of the soundest scholars I have ever met with, have acquired their erudition at the universities of this kingdom; and should those venerable monuments of the wisdom and piety of our ancestors ever fall into disrepute, I question not that the blow will be nationally felt, in the religion, the morals, and the literature of this country.

E S S A Y

E S S A Y V.

OF PENETRATION AND FORESIGHT.

*The Association of Ideas.—Anecdote relative to that Theory.—
Penetration.—Foresight.—Effects of these Accomplishments.*

MODERN philosophy, if it did not invent, has at least methodized, elucidated, and explained a system, which accounts better for the operations of the mind, than the ingenious but discordant metaphysics of Plato and Aristotle.

It is, I believe, generally agreed, that our ideas are all connected, linked, or, in the technical phrase, *associated* together; and that each idea has its proximate, which it never fails to introduce: and thus our thoughts succeed one another in a regular series, as they happen to be related to each other¹.

¹ It is but justice to the ancients to observe, that this philosophy was not quite unknown to them. Plato and Aristotle have frequent allusions to it; and it served as a foundation to some of the maxims of Stoical morality. Οἷα αὖ πολλὰ καὶ φαντασθῆς, τοιαυτὴ σὺ εἶναι ἡ διάνοια· βαπτέται γὰρ ὑπὸ τῶν φαντασίων ἡ ψυχὴ.—Ant. l. v. c. 16.

This

This theory is pleasantly illustrated by a story which Hobbes relates in the third chapter of his *Leviathan*. *In a discourse, says he, on our present civil war, what could seem more impertinent, than to ask, as one did, what was the value of a Roman penny? Yet to me the coherence was manifest enough. For the thought of the war introduced the thought of delivering up the King to his enemies; the thought of that brought the thought of the delivering up of Christ; and that again the thought of the thirty pence, which was the price of that; and thence easily followed that malicious question: and all this in a moment of time, for thought is quick.*

That faculty, which is usually called *penetration*, seems to depend altogether on such an intimate knowledge of human nature, as enables us accurately to distinguish the associations which influence the train of thought. It is, in fact, the art of filling up the blanks in conversation, and turning over readily a number of ideas which intervene, though not expressed, and which are the several links of the chain in another person's mind. It is, as it were, transforming yourself into that other person, and thinking for some time exactly the same. Experience will render a man most adroit at this, as at all other exercises. A lively genius is necessary in the observer;
 some

some aid may possibly be derived from physiognomy; the general character of the subject will assist in decyphering his thoughts; and the external manners and behaviour must be carefully noted.

Similar to this, and connected with it, is the faculty of *foreseeing*, from the present thoughts and actions of men, what they will probably be in future. All our judgments of the future are formed by the recollection of the past: on our knowledge of human nature, therefore, this power must depend.

These faculties constitute the true *second sight*, which, as was imagined of the fabulous, brings probably as great an addition to our pains as to our pleasures. It reveals to us a number of the distresses of our fellow creatures, which escape common eyes; and, I fear, it seldom discovers evil till it is too late to remedy it.

The remarks contained in this Essay will in some measure account for many delicate embarrassments, which a nice observer experiences in company. He pierces beyond the outward colouring. He sees vices, and consequences, which none but himself remarks. His heart bleeds, when every thing around him wears the face of joy. I have observed such a person, at an entertainment, more pensive than those for whom he felt.

These

These faculties of penetration and foresight will, perhaps, sometimes lead us into error; and, if fancy be but active, we may magnify a small discovery into something very extraordinary. But whether they contribute or not to the happiness of the possessor, the good effects of them to society are not to be disputed, if *in good hands*: and the higher endowments of the mind I hope, and I believe, usually are. In good hands, these faculties may prevent, if not all, a great deal of mischief, by timely advice; and the evil they can do, in bad hands, is not equal to the good which they in other respects produce.

E S S A Y VI.

AN IMPARTIAL INQUIRY INTO THE REASON-
ABLENESS OF SUICIDE.

Of the Epicureans, ancient and modern.—Inconsistency of the latter.—Death the Evil which is most generally dreaded.—Why other Evils are accounted such.—Vicissitudes of Things.—Sentiments of Epicurus.—Whether Suicide be a Mark of Cowardice.

AMONG the ancient sects of philosophers, those who professed the severer morality represented *suicide*, when it appeared necessary to preserve their persons from disgrace, or to avoid the risk of forfeiting their honour, as an act of religion; but it was seldom practised by the gay votaries of Epicurus, who esteemed *life* as being fruitful of happiness under almost any circumstances¹.

¹ The following is the prayer of a true Epicurean in sentiment and practice.

Debilem facito manu,
Debilem pede, coxâ;
Tuber adstrue gibberum,
Lubricos quate dentes;
Vita dum superest, bene est.
Hanc mihi, vel acutâ
Si sedeam cruce, sustine.

SENEC. Ep. 101.

Our

Our *modern Epicureans*, who have assiduously selected whatever was the worst in all the ancient systems, have in this respect deviated from the example of their founder; and since to commit suicide has been held contrary to religion, it is become fashionable with these consistent reasoners to contend for its expediency. There is, however, little danger that their tenets on this subject will ever rise into general estimation. A few may amuse themselves indeed with fantastical speculations; but whatever counteracts the instincts of nature will never be commonly practised.

Whether the love of life be an habitual passion, resulting from the greater proportion of good than of evil in this state of existence; or whether it be an innate principle implanted in us at our first creation; either way, *self-preservation* appears to be the ordinance of Providence. The advocates for natural religion agree, that we can only know the Creator's will by those general arrangements, which are called the laws of nature. Now by what means should we be proper judges, *when* it is lawful or expedient to dispense with them?

But waving these higher speculations, as well as those arguments founded on religious principles, which have so successfully been urged against

gainst suicide—if I can produce moral, and, still more, selfish arguments against its expediency in any case, the disquisition will be more adapted to the notions and capacities of my antagonists.

In the first place I would observe, that however a momentary resolution may fortify the mind, however other motives may be predominant on some particular occasions, *death is in reality the evil which is most generally dreaded, and is the prime cause why other evils are accounted such.* Who pities the disease that is not mortal? Tell a company, that their friend or neighbour is confined to his chamber by the gout in the extremities; that he is not only disabled from helping himself, but suffers the most excruciating torture in his fingers or his toes; the narrative will hardly chace a single smile from the countenances of the auditors, or give birth to one serious reflexion. Tell this company, at another time, that the same person is in the crisis of a fever, that he is *deprived of sense*, and that the scene of life is expected immediately to close, and you may presently observe the difference between the sentiment or apprehension of pain and death. An apoplexy is an awful and alarming event; many local complaints will occasion treble the pain, and
yet

yet these neither excite our pity nor our apprehensions.

Most of the human passions, even *avarice* and *ambition*, have been traced with equal truth and ingenuity into the *love of life*¹. The former is derived from the excessive care of providing for our subsistence: the object of the latter is the admiration of others; and this admiration is coveted only because we can make it subservient to the obtaining of the means and the comforts of life. This is certainly the origin of ambition; though in the present state of society men are ambitious from custom and example.

Poverty is dreaded, because it leads to *death*: it cannot be the mere *pain* of starving of which men are apprehensive; for many of the Romans adopted that mode, as one of the easiest of putting an end to their existence²: and there is nothing truly dishonourable in unmerited poverty. As to the loss of honours and dignities, it will admit of the same solution. I speak of the first principles, of the spring of these passions.

¹ See Hartley's excellent Theory of the Human Mind, and a Preliminary Dissertation prefixed to King's Origin of Evil.

² Coccius Nerva, and many others.—Tac. An. vi. c. 26. Plin. Ep.

If, therefore, *the love of life, and the fear of losing it, be the cause of most of our uneasiness, the contradiction and false reasoning are manifest, in flying for a remedy to the very evil which is the prime occasion of that mental agitation, which we undergo, and which we wish to avoid.*

The vicissitudes of all sublunary things contradict the expediency of suicide on any occasion. Revolutions as sudden as astonishing have taken place in the human constitution, both with and without the aid of medicine; and experience assures us, that it is absurd to despair in any stage of a distemper. As to those evils and afflictions, which depend upon the capriciousness of the human mind, it must necessarily be impossible to answer for their duration. The deaths of *Cato* and of *Brutus* have been justly censured as premature: of the former, I remember Lord *Bolingbroke* has somewhere asserted, he should have died at *Munda*, not at *Utica*. The trembling *Claudius*, after the assassination of his nephew, expecting immediate death, is accidentally discovered by a common soldier, and, dragged by the feet from his hiding-place, is saluted Emperor. Nor is the unfrequency of such events sufficient to warrant the abandoning of ourselves to despair.

Though *Epicurus* is said by some to have admitted of the expediency of suicide on certain

occasions, his arguments in favour of fortitude under pain and affliction make so directly against it, that we must either attribute the charge to the ignorance and mistake of those who have commented on his doctrines, or account it one of those contradictions and inconsistencies too often apparent in the systems produced by the unassisted efforts of human reason. The evils of life, says this philosopher, are either bodily or mental. As bodily pain is certainly an evil, a wise man will endeavour to avoid it; but when he cannot, he will be careful not to magnify it by fancy or opinion. If pain be very intense, it must presently cease; if it continue long, habit will lessen its rigour; and several intervals will occur of ease, if not of happiness: as he remarks, that most chronic distempers admit of a greater proportion of pleasure in life than of pain.

If patience and fortitude can lessen and alleviate so much of real corporal suffering as we find they do, much more effectual will they prove in the evils of the mind, since the greater part of these depend upon *opinion*¹. If our anxiety
proceed

¹ Id hic generatim sufficiat, quod obiter quoque insinuavimus, esse ægritudinem non natura, sed opinione mali, qua necesse est omnes esse in ægritudine, qui se in malis esse arbitrantur, sive illa ante provisa et expectata sint, sive

proceed from a sense of guilt, the true remedy is future virtue and penitence. But if, says *Epicurus*, we are made unhappy by the loss of external goods, it is our own fault that we over-rate their value. Wealth and dignities are mere cheats of the imagination; and even the loss of friends, though it may lessen, cannot destroy the satisfaction of a wise man, whose chief source of pleasure is in himself; in the exercise of his faculties¹, the investigation of truth, and those sublimer occupations, which the loss of externals cannot interrupt. In fine, since a wise man ought to be informed of the uncertainty of all such possessions, he ought to use them as fluctuating and transitory goods, and ought to be prepared for the loss of them².

Intervenerint. Nam qui sit, ut non minus lætetur, cujus filius sit interfectus, sed id tamen nesciat, quam si revera viveret; ac pari ratione, si famæ detractum, in peculium furto alatum, &c. Quare, ut ægritudinis sensus exprimatur in animo, necesse est opinio, non natura interveniat. Quoque minus dubites, si ille filium suppositium esse germanum existimet, et germanum pro filio non habeat; renuntiata germani morte, nullatenus movebitur; renuntiata suppositii, vehementissime angetur.—*Epic. Synt.*

¹ “Ipsi sapienti vivere cogitare est.”—*Epic. Synt.*

² *Phil. Epic. Syntag. Diog. Laert. Vit. Epic.*

These,

These, though far short of those consolations which are supplied by a dependance on an all-wise Providence, and by the hopes of a future existence, are arguments of no little moment against the expediency of suicide. And, if suicide be contrary to reason, and be the dictate only of rashness and passion, or at most of a misguided imagination, I do not hesitate to pronounce it sinful,

I cannot, after all, agree with the trite observation¹, which states the act of suicide as the effect of cowardice. I believe, that, in such cases, fear is not always the predominant passion; but that jealousy, resentment, indignation, or remorse, are as frequently the motives of suicide, as even the apprehension of shame: nor can any consideration move me to enrol a *Cato*, a *Brutus*, or even a *Clive*, in the list of cowards. Till some better solution is offered, I shall, for my own part, continue to admire, with all proper respect, the *stoical justice* of our *inquest juries*, who, with equal sagacity and candour, exte-

¹ It is, however, as old as Aristotle. I have met with it somewhere in the works of that philosopher, I think the Republic.

nuate the offence against reason and society, by the verdict LUNACY¹.

¹ Quem mala stultitia, et quemcunque inscitia veri
Cecum agit, insanum Chryssippi porticus et grex
Autumat.

HOR.

It is a common argument made use of in favour of *suicide*, that there is no direct prohibition of the crime in Scripture.— In the same manner, I do not recollect in Scripture a single word against *man-eating*; and yet the latter is certainly a vice, and a *fashionable vice* in some countries.

ESSAY

E S S A Y VII.

OF SLAVERY, AND THE SLAVE TRADE¹.

P A R T I.

OF THE JUSTICE AND HUMANITY OF THE
SLAVE TRADE.

Introduction.—History of the African Slave Trade.—First Argument for the Slave Trade, that the Africans are the Descendants of Cain, or of Ham the disobedient Son of Noah.—Second Argument, that the Africans are an inferior Order of Animals.—Third Argument, that they are purchased.—Fourth Argument, that they have been Slaves from Infancy, and know no better Life.—Fifth Argument, that they are wretched in their own Country, and consequently happier in the West Indies.—Narratives of Cruelties perpetrated on Slaves during their Passage.—State of the Slaves in the West India Islands.

IF, by the joint efforts of science and religion, the moral state of the world has been considerably improved; still, it must be confessed, that there exist among mankind many remains
of

¹ Should the reader perceive a close similarity, not only in fact, argument, and method, but even in style, between the following Essay, and some voluminous publications on the

of barbarism and cruelty, as well as of folly and ignorance. However we may boast of the more enlightened principles upon which, as far as concerns their domestic government, the statesmen of modern Europe appear to act; the feeling moralist must look with an aching eye, and with a bleeding heart, to the depopulated regions of Africa; to that wretched and selfish system upon which our colonies abroad are cultivated, and (I hesitate whether I should add) *peopled*.

It is not my intention, in the following pages, to attempt a complete *history of slavery*. The origin of that abuse, and the condition of slaves among the nations of antiquity, have already been the subject of our animadversion¹; and to enter more minutely into that topic could be of little service to my present design. It may, however, be necessary to state a few remarks on the progress of the slave trade, and the mode of conducting it, by the subjects of Great Britain, before we enter upon an examination of the arguments by which it is usually supported.

same subject, he will be kind enough to recollect, that these Essays were published early in the year 1785. I never, to my knowledge, borrowed a single sentiment without acknowledging my obligation; and I am sorry to see the contrary conduct disgrace any of the advocates (real or pretended) of justice and humanity. N.

¹ Essay V.

To

To the credit of the British government, the *slave trade* was begun contrary to the will of the then reigning monarch (Queen Elizabeth) and has never formally received the direct sanction of a British parliament. From the best accounts which I have been able to collect, the trade was at first carried on in a contraband form, and subsisted chiefly on what *negroes* they could steal, when any of our vessels made a descent on the coast of Africa; and these *negroes* were sold at our colonies as common drudges, without any distinction of rank or circumstances. By some internal regulations among the nations of Guinea, which engaged them to a dreadful retaliation on such of our countrymen as fell into their hands, this species of rapine and fraud was effectually precluded; and the trade is now carried on more systematically, though not with more humanity. Many of the slaves now purchased at Guinea are, I believe, sold by their parents or their chiefs; an act of oppression and cruelty which is only supported by our avarice and want of principle. But the majority of the slaves consists of captives taken in war, and these wars are almost always begun for the sake of acquiring slaves, and are promoted by our traders. I could particularize vessels which have not only gone freighted with arms and ammunition, for the sole purpose of engaging

engaging the *African* nations to plunder and destroy each other, but have actually taken a part in these wars, have assisted to burn the towns and ravage the country of an innocent people, purely for the sake of expediting their cargoes.

It would scarcely be imagined, at the first view, that a system of such complicated inhumanity, oppression, and fraud, could find any apologists; or that a single argument or excuse could be adduced in its support. But the dullest mind is whetted by a sense of interest; and, I am sorry to observe, that there is no action so black and detestable, but will raise itself advocates, if attended with any degree of profit*.

Superstition,

* All mankind, in arguing from their own feelings, must agree, that slavery is an *abuse*; indeed it is but justice to even the apologists for slavery to say, that no person has yet appeared so senseless as to assert the contrary. Now, to justify an *abuse*, or rather to *excuse* it, it is necessary to *prove* that evils greater than the *abuse* itself are prevented through its means. The *onus probandi*, therefore, must entirely lie upon the advocates for slavery. Before even any apology be admitted, they must *prove* (for assertion will not do) that the want of rum and sugar, or rather an increase (probably not considerable) in the price of these articles in England, would be a greater moral evil than the loss of life to 80,000 persons,

Superstition, the natural ally and associate of tyranny, has not been backward to cover, with her mysterious sophistry, the oppression of these unhappy people. It has been asserted, with equal ignorance and effrontery, that, as *God set a mark upon Cain*, these *black nations* must of ne-

persons, who are annually destroyed in an untimely and cruel manner, added to the severity and ill-treatment which far superior multitudes, who survive, experience. 2dly, They must *prove*, that the state of the negroes themselves is bettered by being transported to the West Indies; that is, that they are happier there than in their own country, and this I think can only be done, by consulting the negroes themselves, by giving it into their own choice to return to their own country or to continue in their present state. 3dly, They must *prove*, that none of these negroes are made captives for the purpose of supplying our traders; but that *all* of them would either be put to death or continue in a slavery equally severe in their own country, if we did not receive them. Here, in particular, assertion must not be admitted, because all analogy is against the advocates for slavery on this topic, since it is most natural to believe, that the same love of gain, which induces our people to purchase slaves, will induce the African chiefs to commit depredations on their less powerful neighbours for the purpose of obtaining these slaves. After these circumstances are *fully proved*, there will then remain some other questions for examination; but until these are cleared up to our satisfaction, the coolest and the soundest logic ought not to admit the question even to be debated. N.

cessity

cessity be his descendants.—Unluckily for this argument, the posterity of Cain was all extinguished at the flood. Others have applied the curse of Noah to the inhabitants of Guinea, and would persuade us that they are the posterity of Ham.—But Ham *was the father of Canaan*, and we have no proof that the Canaanites were *negroes*. This is in the true spirit of *retrogressive* logic; it is reasoning from the effect to the cause indeed!—So, if at any future time we should think it proper, or profitable, to enslave a free people, and want an apology to justify our violence, we have only to assert boldly, and *because we have made them slaves*, argue, that they must necessarily be descendants of the disobedient son of Noah.

Both extremes, either *false religion*, or the total want of it, will equally serve the purposes of injustice. It has been asserted, *that the negroes are a distinct and inferior race of beings; and that therefore we are justified in treating them like brutes*. Though I will not allow that granting the premises will warrant the conclusion, I deny both. On this subject, revelation is approved by reason and sound philosophy; is supported by the best authorities among the Pagan historians; and the doctrine which it inculcates is not less
salutary

salutary than true¹. The opinion, that we are all children of one common parent, is calculated to promote harmony and benevolence among the human race; but if we admit the contrary, where shall we draw the line? The American and the Indian nations are distinguished from us by great peculiarities in the external form; and even few of the polar nations can claim kindred with us on the principle of resemblance². To admit, therefore, a difference in feature or complexion, as a justification of *slavery*, would be little short of declaring war against the whole human race. A man of unquestionable probi-

¹ If animals of a different species propagate, the production is a *mule*, which is *incapable of continuing its own species*. This order, so admirably adapted to preserve distinct the different species of animals, is an excellent illustration (as all sound philosophy will be found) of the truth of Scripture, which assures us, that *God created of one blood all the nations of the earth*.

² I am convinced, that I have disgraced my work by noticing such arguments as the two last, or condescending to combat them. The necessity of the occasion must be my only excuse with the thinking part of mankind. A few years hence, it will not be credited that such arguments could be advanced in the latter end of the 18th century; or that the news-papers, &c. of the day abounded with shallow defences of slavery, grounded upon these futile hypotheses. N.

ty¹, who for many years had the superintendance of a school of *negroes*, has solemnly affirmed, that he found in them capacities equal to those of white people, for every intellectual attainment. The Poems of a Negro girl, and the Letters of Ignatius Sancho, are striking instances of genius contending against every disadvantage, resulting from want of encouragement, and of early cultivation².

To turn from arguments beneath the attention of a rational being.—The *planter* or the *trader* tells us, *he has a property in these slaves, because he has bought them.*—But will any sensible lawyer inform you, that a purchase is good, unless *a right be vested in the original vender?* Will it excuse for receiving goods *knowing them to be stolen*, that you pay a price for them? What difference, in the eye of justice, can exist, between him who urges to the crime, and him who commits it? Is the miscreant, who hires an assassin, guiltless, and he who strikes the blow only worthy of a gibbet? Now there is no proposition in morals, and few in any other science, so clear, as that *Nature never gave any*

¹ Ant. Benezet. See his Tract on Slavery.

² Let us not forget, that these despised negroes were formerly our masters in all the arts, sciences, and manufactures. See all the late writers on Egypt. N.

human

*human being an absolute right over the person, happiness, and liberty of another*¹. To admit the contrary proposition; to admit, *that superior force confers such a right*, would be to subvert every moral and social obligation, to convert the earth into a *Pandemonium*, and mankind into Devils².

These

¹ “If you have a *right* to enslave others; there may be others, who have a *right* to enslave you.” PRICE on the American Revolution.—“If it be lawful to injure because we can; if we may seize the property of another, insult his person, or force him to labour for our luxury or caprice, merely because he is weaker; this principle will be equally fatal to ourselves, when fortune shall strip us of that *power* which is our only prerogative. Upon this supposition, your slaves, the instant they shall become the strongest, will have a right to your services; will have a right to force you to labour naked in the sun, to the music of whips and chains; to rob you of every thing that is now dear to your indolence, or necessary to your pleasures; to goad you to every species of servile drudgery, and punish you for their amusement and caprice; will have a right to exhaust your youth in servitude, and to abandon your age to wretchedness and diseases,” &c.—Fragment of a Letter on the Slavery of the Negroes, by Thomas Day, Esq.

² The consistent Mr. Jefferson, one of the virtuous republican ambassadors, is of opinion, that to be obliged to pay tythes is a most cruel, wanton, unwarrantable stretch of tyranny; but that slavery is perfectly justifiable, and agreeable to the principles of religion and morality. In other words,

it

These *negroes* might possibly have been slaves, had you not bought them—though there is the greatest probability, that not one hundredth part of the number would be reduced to that situation, that now are, if the trade were abolished: but however that may be, it cannot excuse the guilt of an action, that another would have perpetrated it, if you had not. The *planter*, the *slave-merchant*, the *king*, the *legislature* that permits the traffic, have each their respective portion of guilt; which is heightened, rather than extenuated, by the circumstance of having taken advantage of the necessity, of the ignorance, or even of the vices of others.

It is said further, *that persons, whose life has been one continued course of slavery, have known no better; and consequently, unconscious of the wretch-*

it is a high pitch of tyranny and wickedness to oblige infidels and atheists to contribute a small part of their property to the support of learning, virtue, and religion, provided the said atheists, &c. shall have the good fortune to be born on the continent of America, and to have white faces; whereas the property, liberty, happiness, and lives of innocent and devoted millions may at pleasure be sported with, provided these unhappy victims have the misfortune to be born on the other side of the Atlantic, and to have black faces.—So little do men understand of the divine commandment—Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them, for this is the law and the prophets. N.

edness

edness of their situation, they are nearly on a par in happiness with the rest of mankind. Alas! where then is the advantage of *refinement, of wealth, of liberty?* Why are certain enjoyments called blessings, and why render thanks to the Divine Providence for having imparted them to us, if we are equally well without them?—But do the *negroes* really know no better?—Can you stop their eyes, their ears? Can you eradicate all the natural feelings of man, the appetite for reasonable enjoyment, the sense of pain, of hunger, and fatigue? Can you conceive it possible to persuade them, that their voluptuous tyrants are possessed of no greater enjoyments than themselves?

But we are informed, *that these people are barbarians, that they are slaves at home, and that they are much happier in the West Indies, than in their native country.* Have they then told you, that their country is the only country under Heaven, to which the Deity has denied the possibility of inhabiting it with comfort? Have they told you, that they had no families, no dear connections in that country, from which you have violently separated them? Do they express no pleasure in the hope of revisiting that country, when death shall end the sorrows to which you have introduced them? and do none of them, in that very

A a

hope,

hope, effect a violent and premature termination of their existence?—But, since it is so confidently affirmed, that our violence and avarice really make them happier, let us candidly inquire, in what this happiness consists; and what are the great advantages which we confer upon them.

I am confident I am below the truth, when I say, that not less than *one fifth* of these victims of avarice, are murdered in their passage¹; not indeed by the sword or the halter, but by pains and tortures more cruel and protracted. Three or four hundred are usually confined in the hold of a ship, where a pestilential air, bad provisions, the regret of being forced from their kindred and friends, and, not seldom, diseases which they acquire from our people, make dreadful havock: and where, amidst accumulated miseries, the only relief they can expect, is too frequently denied them. But a recent transaction will best illustrate this part of my subject; and it is but justice to hand it down, if possible, to the execration of posterity².

In

¹ The most authentic computations state the loss at *one third*, before they are properly established on the plantation.

² For the principal materials of the following narrative, the author acknowledges himself indebted to a Gentleman, whose

In the summer of the year 1781, the master of a vessel from *Liverpool*, on the coast of *Africa*, having an opportunity of procuring a greater number of slaves than he could conveniently dispose of on board, purchased, at some of the settlements, a prize vessel, which he stocked with *negroes*, and commissioned the surgeon of his own ship, one *Collingwood*, to conduct to *Jamaica*.

On the 6th of September 1781, the ship *Zong*, or *Zurg*, Luke Collingwood master, sailed from the island of St. Thomas for *Jamaica*, with about 440 *negroes*, and 17 white persons, on board. On the 27th of November following, she fell in with the place of her destination: but the master, either through ignorance or design, ran the ship to *leeward*, alledging that he mistook it for *Hispaniola*.

About this time (as is usual in slave ships) a violent sickness and mortality raged on board; so that, from the time of her leaving *Africa* to the 29th of November, not less than sixty slaves and seven white persons died, and a great number of the remaining slaves were sick of the same distemper.

whose unremitting endeavours in the cause of humanity demand the sincere thanks of every friend of liberty, justice, and religion.

Collingwood now conceived, or else judged it a proper season to put in execution, one of the blackest projects that ever entered the mind of man. He now discovered, or pretended to discover, that their stock of fresh water was reduced to 200 gallons :—though, observe, there was no present want of water ; they were not as yet put to short allowance ; there was a probability (as soon after happened) of a supply by rain ; and, at all events, I have been credibly informed, they might have made some of the enemy's settlements in less than twenty-four hours. These, and other circumstances, render it probable, that *Collingwood* determined on the murder of the negroes, not really on account of the scarcity of water ; but that, by throwing over the sick negroes on the plea of necessity, the owners might be enabled to recover their value from the insurers. With this design in view, *Collingwood* called together a few of the officers, and told them, *That if the slaves died a natural death, it would be to the loss of the owners ; but if they were thrown alive into the sea, the loss would be the underwriters.* To this proposal the chief-mate at first objected ; observing, *That there was no present want of water, and therefore no excuse for such a measure.* He and the rest of the crew were, however,

however, soon persuaded; and, the same evening, the master selected 132 slaves, all of whom were sick and weak, and ordered them to be thrown into the sea. On the 29th of November, 54 innocent and unhappy persons were thrown overboard alive, and on the following day 42 more. On the first of December, and for a day or two following, there fell a plentiful rain, which enabled them to collect *six casks of water*, and took away the sole argument for putting to death the *negroes*, namely, the plea of wanting water. The fate of the unfortunate victims was, however, predetermined; and, *even after the rain*, 26 *negroes* were thrown overboard, with their hands fettered or bound, and in the sight of several others, who were brought upon the deck for the same purpose, and *ten* of whom, to avoid the unnecessary cruelty of having their hands confined, jumped overboard, and were also drowned¹. The reader will scarcely be inclined to believe that the perpetrators of this horrid action escaped with impunity. The *humane* owners, I was informed, affected to censure the *imprudence* of the

¹ To those who may think that the plea of wanting water was a sufficient justification of the above transaction, I will put one plain question—If those persons who suffered had been white men, and not slaves, would they have been thrown overboard?

murderer—It seems *the underwriters hesitated to make good the insurance*¹.

This anecdote (shocking as it is) is, however, not without a parallel: for, not many years ago, a vessel from Africa, freighted with *negro slaves*, was run ashore on the island of *Jamaica*. The master and crew saved themselves in the boat;

* The memory of this unfortunate man has been very injuriously treated, and by those from whom it was least deserved, the friends of slavery, who now affect to exclaim against him as a monster of inhumanity. In answer to these reproaches, I think it a duty to declare, that I knew Collingwood well—He had an education far superior to the generality of those who are engaged in the African trade—In his general conduct he appeared to me a liberal, benevolent, and well-intentioned man—He was indeed deeply infected with the same unjust prejudices that mark all who are connected with that iniquitous traffic, who consider the negroes as an inferior race of beings, whom we are entitled to treat as we please: I do, however, with the utmost sincerity, and with the utmost candour, believe, that he was rather of a milder and more humane disposition than most who are engaged in the slave trade; and, from repeated conversations with many of the Guinea captains and Guinea merchants, I can lay my hand on my heart, and solemnly give it as my opinion, that scarcely any of them would have scrupled to act the same part with Collingwood, if they were placed under the same temptation. Before the fact was made clear in a court of justice, it was attempted to be denied, at least the principal circumstances of it; and even afterwards it was defended by the advocates of slavery, till the clamour excited against it rendered them somewhat more modest. N.

and, through I know not what unnecessary fears for their own safety, knocked the *negroes* on the head as they swam to shore¹.

It is not easy to decide which are more deserving our commiseration, the multitudes who perish in this wretched manner, or those who are reserved for perhaps greater sufferings in our West India colonies. If a robust habit, or a favourable voyage, enable them to survive the hardships of transportation, they have next to encounter all the evils of scanty and unwholesome provisions, hard labour, and severity. The allowance of food on the plantation is seldom more than a *pint of beans, or Indian corn, per diem*: in some plantations, indeed, they are also allotted a spot of ground for their subsistence, which they must cultivate at those hours that ought to be appropriated to sleep². The hours of labour are

¹ See some affecting anecdotes in Mr. Newton's *Thoughts on Slavery*; particularly one of a mate of a ship, who threw an innocent and helpless infant overboard, only for crying and disturbing him in his sleep. N.

² I have been well informed, that the usual way is to allow them nothing but what they can cultivate themselves on a spot of ground, the very worst in the plantation, which is allotted them. Sunday (instead of being devoted to their religious or moral improvement) is the only day allowed to work their own ground; and so exhausted are they with their

are *sixteen*, and at the *very least thirteen*¹, out of the *twenty-four*; and the exertions which are required are frequently more than their natural strength or constitution will bear. A person of veracity assured me, that he has seen, in one of our West India islands, a slender female, with a child at her back, compelled to carry up a high ladder seventeen Bristol bricks, during the whole of a summer's day. When her strength was exhausted, she sat down, and in the bitterness of her soul burst into a flood of tears; but so little of humanity existed in the breast of her task-master, that he immediately roused her to a renewal of her labour by a severe flagellation.

During the greater part of their labour, they are exposed to the intolerable rays of an equinoctial sun. The pregnant wretch, who droops with weakness and fatigue, and the miserable convalescent, untimely summoned from the bed of sickness, are equally subjected to the incle-

their week's labour, that the planters are obliged to whip them frequently, to induce them to this labour. See *Considerations on the Emancipation of the Negroes*, by a West India Planter. N.

¹ The labour in some degree depends upon the season: they are generally called up an hour before day, and are sent home about an hour after nightfall. At the season of gathering in the canes, they are frequently kept to work some hours in the night. N.

mency

mency of the elements, and the wanton cruelty of their *drivers*. The common instrument made use of to keep them to their work, is a *whip*, like the *Russian knout*, which flays off the skin wherever it is applied; and let it be remembered, that the use of this instrument is at the *discretion* of a *transport*, or some of the most drunken or abandoned domestics of the planter¹.

To support a system of such unparalleled oppression, it is natural to suppose that the punishments must be severe; and when inflicted not by the cautious hand of law, but by passion and caprice², it is natural to suspect that they must frequently be unjust. The shocking instances of

¹ I might add the severe confinement, to which the domestic slaves, who are, however, the most favoured, are sometimes subjected. I have been told of a Mrs. B. in Tortola, who kept her cook chained by the waist with a chain just long enough to permit her to perambulate the kitchen; the same lady had her two sempstresses chained to the ground. N.

² A man had been whipping a *negro* in one of the West India islands, and after a very severe use of the scourge was setting him free. A sailor happened to be passing by at the time, and cried out with an execration, "He has not got enough yet; give him another dozen for me!" The man tied the *negro* up again, and almost whipped him to death for the entertainment of the sailor.

momentary rage, in mutilating¹, bruising, or whipping slaves to death, would fill volumes that might emulate the legends of a *Fox*, or the records of the *Inquisition*².

If, under these complicated injuries, an effort is made to recover the natural rights of man; on

¹ See an anecdote recorded in Mrs. Yearsley's poem on the slave trade, p. 24, as much to the honour of the unhappy negro, who suffered a wanton amputation of his limb, as to the everlasting disgrace, and, I fear, everlasting condemnation, of his butchers. N.

² A slave, one of the most valuable sort, being caught in an intrigue with one of his master's black concubines, and having the boldness and impudence to endeavour to justify his conduct, on a plea that she was his wife; the white tyrant was so exasperated, that, after binding the object of his fury hand and foot, he threw him, in that condition, into a large fire of wood. By dint of hard struggling, and the interposition of some of his fellow slaves, in whom humanity overcame the fear of punishment, he was got out of the fire alive, but was burnt in a manner too shocking to be described. I had the account from the poor wretch's own mouth, as he sat toiling at the oar of a ferry-boat, the master of which had bought him at a cheap rate of his former employer, to whom he was rendered unserviceable as a field slave, being very much crippled in his feet, part of both of which he had lost in his fiery trial. I enquired likewise in the neighbourhood respecting the truth of the story, and had it authenticated to me on undeniable testimony.—A Letter from the Rev. J. Rennie, Vicar of Long-Inchinton, Warwickshire. N.

discovery,

discovery, the sentence is of the same complexion with the cruelty which occasioned the crime. The trials are very summary; the evidence required very slight; the judges frequently ignorant; the jury prejudiced¹; so that I doubt not but innocence too often suffers. *Gibbetting alive* is always the punishment. I knew a gentleman who had seen, in Antigua, some of these wretches exist on the gibbet to the *ninth day*, with a loaf of bread hung at the end of the gibbet to enhance the torture.—The intent of this punishment could not surely be example—It was the wanton revenge of base, of groveling, and diabolical minds².

But it is not for *real* crimes only that the unhappy subjects of these pages are doomed to suffer.—I believe the following is a fact which is generally allowed. As the government al-

¹ If in any of the islands the fate of the poor negroes be thought deserving, on any occasion, of a British tribunal, be it remembered that they are not tried by a jury of their *peers*, but of their *masters*. But the fact is, in most of our colonies, any three justices of the peace may, in a very summary manner, condemn a negro to death.

² The punishment of gibbetting alive is, I find, the punishment for all capital offences. Can a British legislature suffer so abominable and useless a relick of barbarity to exist!

ways pays the full price for any *negro* who suffers death upon conviction of felony; when an unprincipled planter has an old *negro* who is past his labour¹, and consequently (as they term it) a dead weight on the plantation, the planter takes care to starve him, till the *negro* is reduced by hunger to a state of desperation: some provision is then laid in his way, in order to tempt him to steal; which if he does, he is dragged to justice, he is executed, and the deliberate murderer pockets the wages of blood and perjury.

Authors on this subject have remarked the practice of advertising a higher reward for *the head* of a fugitive *negro*, than for taking him alive. The injustice and inequality of the punishments have also been frequently the subject of animadversion. If a *negro* kill a *white man*, even through passion or mischance, the inevitable punishment is death. If a *white man* murder a *negro*, he is only mulcted with a slight pecuniary penalty, which yet is seldom, if ever, exacted. Several inferior instances of systematic cruelty have been pointed out, such as marking them on the breast and different parts of the body with a *red hot iron*; which very cruel

¹ This agrees much with the practice of the Romans: See Essay v. p. 126.

operation is repeated as often as a slave changes his master¹.

Miserable

¹ Since this Essay was first written, an excellent treatise on the subject, by Mr. Ramsay, has made its appearance, in which most of the facts, which I have adduced, are confirmed, I might say exceeded, by Mr. Ramsay's representation. Mr. Ramsay's book has since been answered by a spirited writer, Mr. Tobin. This author draws as favourable a picture of the state of the *West India negroes*, as Mr. Ramsay's is gloomy and distressful. Perhaps the representations of both may be founded in fact. The former may have drawn his instances from the more enlightened and more merciful among the planters; Mr. Ramsay, from the more brutal and selfish. But if it were admitted that Mr. Ramsay's state of the case were not always, or even generally true, it is shocking to humanity that such instances should even *sometimes occur*—That it should be in the power of any cruel or capricious mortal to render a fellow-creature so completely miserable.

The question is not, *Whether the laws of those islands be always, and in all cases put in force?* It is, *Why are laws permitted to disgrace the code of any civilized community, which scandalize every sense of justice and humanity?* It is certain (even according to Mr. Ramsay's opponent) that the laws of the West India islands prohibit slaves from *possessing property*—That an unlimited power is vested in the master, *to scourge his slave as often as he pleases*—That to return a blow, even to the meanest and worst of the white inhabitants, is punished by *lopping off the limb*—That if a negro kill a white man, the punishment is *burning alive*; whereas there is no instance of a white man being punished for killing a negro. Mr. Ramsay has another advantage over his opponent, viz. That the assertions of the latter,

Miserable indeed must be that country, which subjects its devoted inhabitants to calamities that may compare with these! The opinion that the *negroes* are happier in our colonies than at home, carries, in the eye of common sense, its own refutation along with it; and must plainly be a falsehood invented by some interested advocate for slavery, or at best a random assertion founded on the partial testimony of some highly favoured *negro*, who was peculiarly distinguished by falling into the hands of a humane and benevolent master.

The facts, which I have adduced, I have taken upon the best authority; I have found them corroborated by many impartial testimonies; and from the reason of things, and the very nature of slavery, there is great reason to believe that this state of the case is not exaggerated¹. The justice
of

latter, respecting the happy state of the *negroes*, are only general; whereas Mr. Ramsay refers chiefly to facts, and facts apparently well authenticated.

It is but doing Mr. Tobin justice to add, that he disclaims in the strongest terms the idea of appearing as an advocate for slavery, which he execrates with all the zeal and earnestness of a good and sensible man. The sole cause which drew him into the controversy, he professes to have been the indiscriminate censure, which he thought was unjustly cast on the great body of West India planters. N.

¹ The state of the *negroes* in their own country is as darkly shaded by the apologists for slavery, as their situation in the
West

of the slave trade (or rather the negative of that term) will I think appear sufficiently evident:

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West Indies is varnished and emblazoned. Though civilization, on the whole, be much conducive to the happiness of man, yet very false estimates have been made of the disadvantages of barbarous nations; and these have been in no case more exaggerated than in that of the *Africans*.—Suppose an *Indian* or a *negro* were to judge of us by the same mode, and only look upon the dark parts of the picture, you would deem it arrogance in him to exclaim—“ I despise, and yet I pity, these Europeans ! Do they imagine themselves free, and presume to call us slaves; themselves polished, and us barbarians ? We have a chief, it is true, whom we follow to the war ; and this chief may, when he pleases, take ourselves, our wives, and children, into his service : but he does not treat us cruelly ; and if he take any thing from us, he takes only our superfluities, and custom has enabled us to be content with little.—But does this self-conceited foreigner compare his happiness with mine ? I, who enjoy in full perfection all the gifts of nature, and make them subservient only to my natural desires. He shuts himself up in a populous city, works at some enervating or unwholesome employment, and falls a victim to diseases, of which we have not so much as heard the name. He has even abused his natural frame, he has made it the very centre of infirmities ; he seldom tastes the pure breath of heaven ; he has not the use of his limbs ; his appetites are vitiated ; he has no relish for food in its natural state ; his meat must be poisoned in a thousand different ways, before he can prevail upon himself to taste it.

“ Does this wretched foreigner compare his happiness with mine ? His books, he says, inform him, that innocence

an inquiry which will have more of novelty, and I dare believe, in the opinion of some, more importance,

cence is pleasure, and guilt is misery. If so, surely I am much the happier of the two. He has vices, he has passions, which are never still. Above all, he has one vice which I can see is a perpetual source of pain and anxiety; it disturbs his rest, it sickens his repasts, it engages him in a variety of frivolous and mean pursuits; what is worse, in actions really unjust, and upon the silly plea that others do the same. He tells me, he has at home a comfortable dwelling, though small; and yet he boasts that it is larger than the palace of our great king. He adds, that he has a charming wife, and promising children. Why then does he come hither? Why will he confine himself within a wooden box, and commit himself to all the dangers of the ocean, or seek death upon these shores so fatal to his countrymen? Nay, more than this, he comes here expressly to commit actions prohibited by the God he affects to worship, and which he knows must be displeasing to him. Indeed there must be something which sits heavy upon his soul, for I observe he cannot even endure his own thoughts. I can sit down with pleasure, and recollect the transactions of the day, or plan the business of the morrow's chase. I can entertain my wives with the history of my youth, or we can sing in turns the praises of our chief. I can spend hours in adoring that great and benevolent being *the Sun*, the author of light, and life, and every good thing; and I can express my gratitude to the inferior ministers of his will, the *Moon* and *Stars*, for their kind offices.—But this man is as ignorant of religion as he is of moral duty. I should scarcely have known that he had a God, but for his

importance, will be the subject of the second part of this Essay¹.

his making so frequent and irreverent use of his name and titles. He no sooner has an hour's respite from his grand employment, the oppression of his fellow-creatures, than he seats himself with some other wretch, as weary of life as himself, to move round pieces of wood upon a table, or to count the specks upon a piece of pasteboard; and he testifies his felicity by horrid imprecations, and the contortions of his countenance. If this be European happiness, give me my stewed elephant, my monkies, and parrots: give me wholesome air and exercise; the company of my wives; a peaceful slumber upon my bed of rushes, undisturbed by the ravages of these detestable Europeans!"—Such, on a nearer view, would perhaps be found the state which you term barbarous, compared with what you arrogantly style refinement. If, indeed, we introduced them to a state of real civilization, the argument would have something more the air of an apology than I will allow it: but I hope none will have the effrontery to contend that the *negroes* in our plantations are introduced to a state of civilization! You might as well assert it of the animals in our stables: and I wish I could even say so much for the majority of those whom they are doomed to obey.

¹ The God of mercy forbid, that even though I should fail in my object of proving the slave trade to be no actual advantage to this country, any should be found so destitute of reason and humanity, as to think the acquisition of a little *property* a sufficient counterpoise to this vast effusion of happiness and life! I must aver, that it were more to the honour of God, to the honour of this nation, infinitely more to the interests of human nature, and more to the real interests of those even who would fancy themselves most ag-

grieved, that all the property of our colonies were buried in the ocean, than that such a system of havock and misery should be suffered to remain. Could I suppose the nation obliged to compensate for the loss which any body of men might suffer by a reformation, I am sure, for one, I would willingly resign half the little property I have to effect so desirable an object. But in reality, there are few or none whose livelihood depends upon the slave trade. It is not to support industrious multitudes, it is not to encourage ingenuity, it is not to alleviate the public burdens; it is to enrich a *few*, that thousands are annually murdered, and that still greater multitudes *sweat drops of blood*: it is that the planter and slave-merchant may riot in luxury, pomp, dissipation, debauchery, in every vice that disgraces and destroys a nation; it is that they may vie in prodigality and effeminacy with the plunderers of the East, and eclipse, by their splendour, the ancient nobles of the realm. The planters themselves would, however, I am persuaded, be little sufferers in the main, by the plan which I am about to recommend: that infamous class of beings, the man-stealers (*ανδραποδισται*) a class of beings whom every nation but our own, even those which admitted of slavery, have constantly held in contempt and abhorrence; these are the only persons who could suffer by a reformation, if even it can be called suffering, to oblige them to retrench their luxury, their extravagance, their vice. N.

E S S A Y VII.

OF SLAVERY, AND THE SLAVE TRADE.

P A R T II.

OF THE GOOD POLICY OF THE SLAVE TRADE.

Whether the Grievances stated in the former Part of this Essay be only particular Abuses of Slavery.—General and national Effects of Slavery.—Inquiry, Whether Work may be more cheaply performed by Freemen or by Slaves.—Inquiry, How far our Commerce would be affected by the Abolition of the Slave Trade.—In respect to our West India Colonies.—In respect to Africa.—How far the Slave Trade may be considered as a Nursery for Seamen.—Inquiry, Whether the present System of Slavery will admit of any Mitigation.—Recapitulation.

IF I have reserved for this second part the only argument in favour of slavery, which appears to have any real weight or importance, it is because *the NECESSITY of that mode of cultivation, which is at present pursued in our West India plantations*, will be better considered in conjunction with the general arguments concerning *the good policy of SLAVERY and the SLAVE TRADE.*

It has never been admitted by the more enlightened class of moralists, that any motive of policy ought to act in opposition to justice; but certainly, if it can be proved that good policy, no less than justice, condemns the measure under our consideration, the argument in favour of humanity will be proportionably strengthened; and no obstacle remaining from the interests of men, we may reasonably hope for its final abolition.

I ought to have mentioned an objection, which may possibly be urged against the preceding facts, viz. *That the grievances which I have stated are only abuses of slavery.*—To this I reply, that *slavery*, under whatever circumstances, is itself an abuse, and that abuses are inseparably interwoven in its very nature. It is impossible to prevent the ravages of war, and the depopulation of *Africa*, if the *slave trade* be encouraged. It is impossible to prevent the most heart-rending separations, the violation of the dearest ties, in forcing them from their native country: it is impossible to prevent the calamities which they must encounter in their passage: nay, it is impossible to prevent the brutality of masters by any general law. Where slavery is permitted, *absolute authority* must accompany it, or the master will want the means of coercion; his property and his life can only be preserved by this unlawful concession:—and
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hence arises the first general argument against the permission of slavery; for there is nothing which so depraves the heart of man, as the unlimited power of doing evil to his fellow-creatures. Absolute authority was never designed for mortals: the best natures will abuse it. *It fills the mind of man, says Mr. Addison, with great and unreasonable conceits of himself; raises him into a belief that he is of a superior species to the rest of mankind; extinguishes in him the principle of fear, which is one of the greatest motives to all duties; and creates the desire of magnifying himself by the exertion of such a power in all its instances. So great is the danger, that WHEN A MAN CAN DO WHAT HE WILL, HE WILL DO WHAT HE CAN.*

SLAVERY is therefore productive of *pride, luxury, and licentiousness*. The dissoluteness of manners, which the unrestrained power of gratification produces in the slave-holders and managers, cannot fail, sooner or later, to involve in ruin the country where this abuse of reason and humanity is permitted¹.

¹ Let every rising state, which, for its future prosperity, places any hope or confidence in the virtue of its members, beware, on the one hand, of exhibiting examples of *tyranny*; and, on the other, of *abject subjection*. Let it beware, on the one hand, of *indolence* and *effeminacy*; and, on the other, of the *knavery, tricking*, and other mean and infamous arts of human nature, when depressed and depraved.

Civilization is retarded by SLAVERY. The manners of the masters are infected by those of the slaves; and every man who is much conversant with this wretched race of beings, must necessarily become more or less a compound of arrogance, vanity, and intemperance, with the opposite vices of meanness, servility, and cowardice.

SLAVERY *enervates industry*, and impedes the progress of human ingenuity. Those laudable inventions which lessen labour, and contribute to the ease of human life, would never have been thought of in a country where slavery was authorized¹.

SLAVERY is *unfavourable to population*; as is most decisively proved in Mr. Hume's *Essay on the Populousness of ancient Nations*.

¹ "Should a slave," as is observed by a modern writer, "propose any improvement of this kind, his master would be very apt to consider the proposal as the suggestion of laziness, and of a desire to save his own labour at his master's expence. The poor slave, instead of a reward, would probably meet with much abuse, perhaps with some punishment. In the manufactures carried on by slaves, therefore, more labour must generally have been employed to execute the same quantity of work, than in those carried on by free men. The work of the former must, on that account, have been generally dearer than that of the latter."

SMITH'S *Wealth of Nations*.

SLAVERY

SLAVERY is inconsistent with public as well as private safety. *The slave is the natural enemy of humankind*; he has experienced no law but that of force, nor can be expected to act according to any other. If therefore he can acquire force sufficient to oppress others of the species, the fate he has experienced, and the maxims he has imbibed, instruct him to make use of it. The inhabitants of our *West India* colonies live under perpetual apprehensions; are compelled to be always subject in some degree to military law; and frequently suffer public as well as private mischiefs from their slaves. The masters and crews of slave ships are in the same situation, and are not seldom sacrificed to the just resentment of the wretches whom they have injured.

That SLAVERY is the least profitable mode of cultivation, has been most satisfactorily proved by an author, whose political knowledge and sagacity have never been questioned¹. The opinion

¹ “The tear and wear of a slave, it has been said, is at the expence of his master, but that of a free servant is at his own expence, &c.—But though the tear and wear of a free servant be equally at the expence of his master, it generally costs him much less than that of a slave. The fund destined for replacing or repairing, if I may say so, the tear and wear of a slave, is commonly managed by a negligent master, or a careless overseer. That destined for performing the same of-

nion is confirmed by the testimony of ancient authors, and by a comparison of the state of our manufactures with those of other countries where slavery is established.

From these general arguments, if we turn to those which more particularly relate to the pre-

fice with regard to the free man, is managed by the free man himself. The disorders which generally prevail in the economy of the rich, naturally introduce themselves into the management of the former; the strict frugality and parsimonious attention of the poor, as naturally establish themselves in that of the latter. Under such different management, the same purpose must require very different degrees of expence. It appears accordingly, from the experience of all ages and nations, I believe, that the work done by free men comes cheaper in the end than that performed by slaves."—Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, b. i. c. 8.

"The pride of man makes him love to domineer, and nothing mortifies him so much as to be obliged to condescend to persuade his inferiors. Wherever the law allows, and the nature of the work can afford it, therefore, he will generally prefer the service of slaves to that of free men. The planting of sugar and tobacco can afford the expence of slave cultivation: the raising of corn, it seems, in the present times cannot. In the English colonies, of which the principal produce is corn, the far greater part of the work is done by free men."—*Id.* b. iii. c. 2.

The experiment has been made in the Hungarian mines, which are wrought by *free men*; and it is found there much more profitable to employ free men than slaves. The colony of Barbadoes, and those colonies of North America, which are cultivated by free men, are also examples in point.

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sent subject; I am much mistaken, if it will be very difficult to prove, that both Britain and her colonies would be in a more flourishing state, if effectual, but gradual and prudent measures were adopted for the abolition of *slavery*.

The objects of *commerce* are, to procure vent for our manufactures, and consequently to promote the health, vigour, and activity of the nation; to maintain a powerful navy; and to increase the comforts of life, by the introduction of a moderate supply of foreign commodities. How far these objects would be affected by the abolition of the slave trade, must constitute the grounds of our present inquiry.

By this measure will not our West India colonies be as it were annihilated? Will they be able to take our manufactures, or to make any returns for them? Who are to consume our commodities, and who are to cultivate the earth, unless the negro slaves on the plantations? In reply to this objection—I have not said, nor do I mean to insinuate, that the *negroes* at present on our plantations are all to be sent back to their native country; I have not said, that they are all to be instantly and rashly emancipated: I would have justice act through the medium of prudence; the severity of their bondage relaxed at first; and their emancipation easy and gradual. There cannot be a doubt that,
after

after obtaining independence, they will continue in our settlements. *Who then will cultivate the earth? Who will consume our manufactures?* I answer, the *negroes* who are now settled in those colonies, and their posterity. To effect these purposes on moderate and equitable principles, let an *Act of Parliament* be passed for the immediate enfranchisement of all *negroes* above 50 years of age; for the enfranchisement of all above 40 in three years; of all above 20 in seven years; and of all under 20, and above 12, in nine years; leaving it to their own discretion to continue subject to their master after this period, to serve at wages, or chuse another master: and let the laws now in being, for maintaining slaves past their labour, remain in force¹. Let another *Act of Parliament* prohibit, on pain of death, the importation of any more slaves from any other quarter whatever. Let these laws be accompanied with another, investing the magistrates with power to set at liberty any slave that has been ill treated; defining the legal punishments of slaves; and with respect to MURDER, and the GREATER CRIMES, putting them upon a footing with the rest of mankind. Can any man suppose that such regulations as these will weaken the spirit of

¹ Since this Essay was first published, I have had the satisfaction of seeing a similar plan adopted with success by the state of Pennsylvania. N.

industry,

industry, or retard its progress? Can any man suppose that the *negroes*, when liberated, would not rather work than starve? Besides that, by this gradual process, they would become habituated to industry, and naturalized to their respective plantations¹. The poor of this country are under no other obligation to work than the necessity of providing for themselves and families; and was ever a country, where slavery was permitted, in so high a state of cultivation as Britain at this time? The colony of *Barbadoes* was in its most flourishing state when cultivated by *free men*; and has visibly declined, and become more and more involved in debt, since the introduction of *negro slaves*. I am well convinced that industry and conduct on the part of the planters, and the use of horses and machines, would considerably

¹ Should this plan not be immediately adopted (as one day or other I have no doubt but it will) I will in the mean while make another proposal, as a proper step to the effecting of this most desirable revolution. Let a society be instituted in this kingdom, and supported by voluntary subscription, sanctioned by act of parliament if they will, for the purpose of granting reasonable bounties to those planters who shall cultivate their lands by free negroes: indeed I do not know a better use to which the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel could apply their revenues. This hint I acknowledge to have received from an excellent writer in the Repository, who signs himself a West Indian. N.

lessen the necessity of human labour. Freedom is ever favourable to population, as well as industry. There cannot therefore be a doubt but that the *negroes* would soon multiply, so as amply to supply the demand for labour. Planters would require much smaller capitals, when they had only to pay for the daily labour of their servants; their returns would be more speedy, and their gains less precarious. The increase of population would encourage the cultivation of the waste lands; and the *negroes* themselves, living in independence, would become our best customers, and consume at least four times the quantity of manufactures now exported.

Those planters who have now their estates well supplied with slaves, would be great gainers by the *prohibition of importing any more*. To breed servants, would, for a certain number of years, be a very profitable business; and the *negroes* becoming civilized and industrious, the owners of estates would make a greater and more certain advantage, by *farming* out those estates, than they possibly can do on the present plan.

What *important commercial advantages* might we derive from a liberal system of commerce with the now *wretched and desolated continent of Africa!* By distressing and depopulating that country, instead of civilizing and encouraging them to the
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use of our manufactures, what an extensive mart do we lose for the labour and industry of this country! This blindness and inattention to their best interests (not only in the people of this country, but in all the nations of Europe) will in another century appear almost incredible. It will hardly be believed, that a commercial nation exerted itself strenuously to destroy and exterminate those people, who might have been excellent customers; and that all our endeavours, instead of rendering them useful to us and to themselves, tended only to retain them in ignorance and barbarity^{*}.

This country has long experienced the benefit of *infant colonies*: I say, *infant colonies*, because, however paradoxical, experience convinces us that colonies are most beneficial in an *infant* state. It merits well the consideration of our government, whether *colonies* might not be established, on a more liberal plan than has hitherto been effected, in the most fertile and temperate climates of Africa—colonies not for the purpose of de-

^{*} “The noblest treaty of peace ever mentioned in history, in my opinion, (says Montesquieu) is that which Gelon made with the Carthaginians: he insisted upon their abolishing the custom of sacrificing their children. Glorious indeed! After having defeated 300,000 Carthaginians, he required a condition that was advantageous to themselves, or rather, he stipulated in favour of human nature.”

vastation,

vastation, but of civilizing the natives—colonies not for promoting war, but for preserving a commercial intercourse. The Africans are more inclined to industry, and in truth are much more civilized, than the American Indians: they are already in a great measure habituated to our manufactures; and if they find that labour and industry will procure a supply of what is so desirable, doubtless they will endeavour to obtain them by these means, rather than by war and plunder. Improvements of every kind are making rapid advances among them; and if it were not for the destructive wars which leave them no permanency in their possessions—wars chiefly, if not entirely, carried on for the sake of supplying the slave ships—I question not but their industry and activity would greatly increase.

Settlements might be purchased at easy rates on the coast of Africa, and opened with some encouragements for the reception of emigrants. I am well informed, that *rich wines, silk, indigo, tobacco, spices*, and even *tea*, together with many other of the most desirable productions of hot climates, might be cultivated there with the greatest success. A number of *free negroes* would soon be found to work for hire; and the colonists might even be allowed to purchase the labour of such *negroes*, as *were actually slaves to their own countrymen*,

countrymen, for seven years; not as slaves, but under the same restrictions as apprentices are taken here ¹.

Restraining duties might be laid, so as to prevent the commerce of the new colonies interfering with that of the old.

It has always been matter of surprise to me, that the rich *mines*, and especially of the precious metals, with which Africa abounds, have never afforded any temptation to Europeans to establish colonies in that part of the world.

The most plausible objection to such a project must be founded on the unhealthiness of the climate of Africa. But we are to remember, that the climate of North America was esteemed even less salubrious than that of Africa, till the civil wars of England obliged some adventurers to brave its imaginary dangers. The climate of the northern parts of Guinea is not so pernicious as that of many of our West India

¹ Dr. Priestley, in his excellent Sermon on Slavery, published in 1788, mentions a fact on the authority of Mr. Osborne, who was employed in negotiating the late peace, which ought to excite the attention of the legislature. This gentleman assured Dr. Priestley, that it would be practicable to work plantations to very great profit in Africa, by means of free negroes; and that *he actually had a plantation of his own there*, on which he employed 300 labourers. N.

islands,

islands, or that of the coasts of Brazil, Paraguay, &c.

But is not the slave trade a nursery for seamen, and does it not support a number of hands who are ready on emergencies to supply our navy? On this subject I must remark, that the African trade is far from a *nursery* for seamen. Few young mariners are brought up in that trade; those who are employed in it are the flower of the British seamen; and whatever advantage it may promise in affording them employment, is more than counterbalanced by the loss of useful hands to the community: for so tedious is the voyage, so bad the treatment and accommodations; so many are the diseases to which they are exposed from the necessity of sleeping upon deck, from the number of human beings that are crowded within the ship, and other circumstances; that seldom more than *two thirds* of the crew return¹.

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¹ Out of *thirty* apprentices in one employ, in *six* years, *twenty-six* died.

I believe that, latterly, the mortality has been rather less than it formerly was: by authentic documents, however, procured from the custom-house in Liverpool, I have been able to ascertain, that even within these last five years, the loss of seamen by disease on the coast of Africa may be stated, on an average, at one fifth; and this, exclusive of the num-

bers

The liberal system of commerce, which I have recommended, would indeed prove a *nursery* of seamen, and would encourage enterprize and industry in every rank of men.

One question only remains for our investigation; and that is, *Whether the evils attending the present state of slavery in our colonies might not be mitigated, and the practice still continue?* I answer, as almost every planter will answer, that the safety of the masters will scarcely admit of any mitigation of those severities, to which the *slaves* are now necessarily subjected. With all the present restrictions, it is a difficult matter to retain these unhappy people in subjection; and if any relaxation (unaccompanied with the cheerful hope of one day regaining their liberty) were to take place, it might endanger the colony. The fact is, *slavery* is a state contrary to nature, and can only be enforced by rigorous and inhuman measures.

To conclude—I have, I think, demonstrated, in the preceding sketch, that *slavery* is directly contrary to the obvious principles of justice and humanity—I have answered, and I apprehend

bers which are forced from the ships by ill-treatment, and left behind in the West Indies, where, I am assured by the best authority, in time of peace, multitudes of British seamen from the African vessels annually perish through actual want. N.

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confuted,

confuted, all the arguments in its favour, general and particular—I have shewn that it is not less consistent with *sound policy*, than with virtue and religion—and, lastly, I have proposed an easy mode of abolishing it, even with a prospect of advantage to those who appear most concerned in its support and continuance.

That so much injustice and cruelty should have been so long exercised for no profitable end, will surprise those who are not acquainted with the false and superficial maxims upon which communities, as well as individuals, are often known to act. It is hard to persuade men to innovate any practice which has the sanction of habit; and were it not for the wisdom and resolution of the few, mankind must have remained stationary, without refinement or liberal science; at least the progress of improvement must have been much slower than ever it was.

To the virtue and wisdom of the British Legislature I direct this appeal.—The character of a reformer is by no means an enviable character; 't is generally esteemed only a gentler appellation for a visionary or enthusiast: and so many are its disadvantages, that no considerate man will hastily adopt it. In this case, however, I will dare to depart from my accustomed moderation. I have considered the subject for a series

of years; I have heard every party; and have settled my opinion on the most solid basis of argument and fact. I am convinced that the false in morals is always the unprofitable; whatever contradicts humanity and justice, can never be for the real interest of society.—Thus, if laws for the prevention of injustice and cruelty be at all salutary—if they restrain or eradicate the vicious propensities—the more generally these laws are extended, the better for society. If the commission of vice be even injurious to ourselves, to put a restraint upon the wayward passions is for our own immediate happiness and advantage. The negative of these positions is sufficiently exemplified by the miserable system of slavery, which the nations of Europe have established in their colonies. A large and fertile tract of territory is wasted and depopulated; and thousands of its inhabitants, who might be taught to cultivate that territory with as much advantage to us as to themselves, are annually murdered. Into our own plantations all the vices, all the inconveniences of *slavery* are introduced, when the business evidently might be carried on to better advantage by *free men* than by *slaves*. Immense capitals are required, and consequently great and sudden losses are occasioned by the death or desertion of slaves, or by the fraud or ignorance of managers; when a system of tenantry might

be easily established, or when the same labour might be employed at little more than the present annual expenditure, by engaging the *negroes* as hired servants.

If what has been advanced have any foundation in reason and truth, let me ask those patriots, whose extended views can behold the welfare of this nation as not unconnected with the general happiness of the human race, what they have to fear in adopting these, or similar regulations, for the accomplishment of the noblest revolution that human virtue can achieve?—If, on the contrary, in the opinion of any honest and well-informed politician, I should appear to be mistaken, it is incumbent upon that man to stand forth, and clear a very considerable body of men from the blackest aspersions which can affect the moral character, that of making multitudes subservient to an imaginary interest of their own, and trifling with the most solemn principles of natural as well as revealed religion.—To such an author I will pledge myself to meet him with all the candour he deserves. But if interest itself cannot move the advocates for slavery to come to an open discussion of the point, the deduction will be fair, that the doctrine is too weak to admit of investigation; and that they would silently evade what they feel themselves unable to confute.

ESSAY

E S S A Y VIII.

A SHORT REVIEW OF THE PRINCIPAL ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF THE GOOD POLICY OF THE SLAVE TRADE¹.

Arguments from Policy in Favour of Slavery.—Emancipation of Negroes.—Arguments against abolishing the Slave Trade.—Hardship on those remaining in Slavery.—Advantages of African Trade.—Quantity of Evil in the Universe.—Planters not inhuman.—Conclusion.

THOUGH, in consequence of the challenge contained in the last Essay, no antagonist has condescended formally to meet me in the fields of controversy, yet I hold myself so far a debtor to the cause of truth, that I ought not to omit the opportunity, afforded me by a second edition, of noticing the arguments which have been advanced by the advocates for the slave trade. To those which respect the justice of it, if any can be supposed to apply in the smallest degree to that part of the question, I have already adverted; nor have I been able to discover any thing new of that kind since the publication of my first edition. On the good

¹ It was thought necessary to add the following Essay to this edition, in order to exhibit a complete state of the controversy on the slave trade.

policy of the trade much has indeed been said, but, as far as I am able to judge, the arguments will lie in a small compass; and as the advocates for the faction seem to have collected their whole strength into one pamphlet, to that I shall, for the sake of order, chiefly reply; and shall afterwards remark upon some other apologies, which are less express in favour of the present system of slavery. The pamphlet to which I refer is intitled, "Considerations on the Emancipation of the Negroes, and on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, by a West India Planter." I shall first notice the concessions of this gentleman, and I shall then proceed to reply to his arguments in the order which I conceive their importance to demand.

The concessions of this author are indeed so many, that I was for some time at a loss to determine whether the defence was ironical or not. He admits, "that the slaves diminish on our plantations; and that the labour which they undergo in our islands will doubtless tend to produce sterility, and disorders which terminate in death". That the only object of the planter is present gain; that whether it be from the pressure of debt, or the impulse of appetite, this is his only object; that his industry consists altoget-

ther in the labour of his slaves ; and therefore no man ought to wonder if they are *overstrained*¹." He confesses also, " that what is allowed for the maintenance of slaves is a mere *trifle*² ;" and admits, " that in more favourable circumstances there is a possibility of negroes multiplying and increasing their numbers³ : " that, in fine, " if the question be put nakedly, whether slavery be an evil, and whether it be not just to prevent negroes being enslaved, there is not a West India planter, who, from the evidence of his own feelings, would not answer in the affirmative⁴." He asserts further the inefficacy of any restraining laws to secure good treatment to slaves—" The *Code Noir* is a mere dead letter ; like many other French edicts, which do not survive a month, if they do not actually drop abortive from the hand of authority⁵." With respect to the trade, he fairly allows, that " a *shocking mortality* arises on board the slave ships⁶ ;" that a considerable portion of the African trade is devoted to the supplying of our enemies ; that thus far the trade is *really hurtful* to the interests of Great Britain, and ought to be discouraged⁷." After all, he assures us that the utmost profit which the planters make by all this waste of

¹ p. 16.² p. 4.³ p. 16.⁴ p. 26.⁵ p. 40.⁶ p. 30.⁷ *Ib.*

blood, and by these outrages to common justice, "does not exceed eight, and very seldom five or six per cent. on his capital¹." Such a trade therefore appears to me scarcely worth contending for.

After such concessions as these, the reader will naturally inquire, not without some degree of surprise, what arguments can be adduced in favour of that cause which he has undertaken to defend. Some arguments, however, he has attempted to produce; and I must do him the justice to believe, that they are the very best the subject will admit of. The first pages of his pamphlet are employed in an enumeration of the mischiefs that would attend an immediate manumission of the slaves in the West Indies, and a laborious calculation (founded however upon false principles and wrong data) of the expence that would be incurred if the nation were to replace the property which the planters would lose in case of such a revolution. He states, that the lands could not be wrought by freemen so cheap as they are at present; but this argument he supports, as it is plain it can only be supported, by two facts, which he gives up to us, namely, that the *negroes do not receive proper subsistence*, and

¹ p. 4.

that *they are over-wrought*. The immediate emancipation of the negroes, however, makes no part of my plan; nor do I believe any such plan is in contemplation among those who are at present inimical to the slave trade: it would therefore be a waste of time to dwell any longer on this part of the pamphlet.

When, however, the author proceeds to alledge the same reasons against the gradual emancipation of the negroes; and to demand for the planter an equivalent from the public for all the slaves which shall be manumitted; it is necessary to put a stop to his inductions, by the plain maxim, that those who have acquired property by unlawful means are entitled to no compensation for its loss. Had the slave trade been sanctioned by the strongest acts of the legislature at its very commencement; no authority on earth could sanction murder, man-stealing, injustice, and cruelty; no human being can have property in the person of another. Those who purchased these slaves should have previously considered the nature of the property they were acquiring. It is a great hardship to the purchaser to deprive him of the stolen goods which he has purchased from a thief; but it was his duty to make himself certain that he purchased them under a fair title.

But

But the truth is, even this is irrelevant to my plan. The very gradual mode of emancipation which I should wish to be pursued would render it scarcely any hardship whatever upon the planter, even for the time; and I have demonstrated, that it would be in the end greatly to the advantage of themselves and their posterity, by gradually elevating them to the situation of European landlords, who might derive a considerable income by letting out their estates to the negroes thus emancipated, with little trouble, and with no probable risk.

By a similar mode of reasoning, the author endeavours to object even to that moderate proposition of preventing the future importation of negroes into the islands. But here this planter falls unavoidably into inconsistencies, as every man must, who does not argue on the broad principles of honesty and moral justice. He objects even to this part of my plan, as a hardship upon his brother planters: but surely it would be a hardship of very trifling consequence, if what he asserts in another part be true, "that the total or average decrease of the negroes is by no means so great as it has been generally imagined"; and if "almost the whole demand for

¹ p. 17.

slaves proceeds from the new settlements alone¹." In this last assertion I have good reason to believe this author not much in the wrong; for the fact has been confirmed to me by what I esteem superior authority. If, therefore, with all the disadvantages and cruelty, which, by his own confession, the negroes labour under, population be still supported, what would it be with good treatment, and with more pains being exerted for its extension?

But the author supposes that the abolition of the slave trade would not be for the advantage of the negroes themselves, who are now on the plantations; for he supposes that the planters, if not permitted to recruit their gangs, will exact still severer exertions from those which remain. Here again he has the misfortune to be inconsistent; for he has already admitted, what indeed every man of common sense will suppose, that as it is, the planters exact from the slaves the very utmost they are able to perform; and it would be paying a wretched compliment to the understandings of his countrymen, to suppose that they will work their slaves *immediately* to death, when they are assured that the loss cannot possibly be supplied. But he is still more incon-

¹ p. 18 and 20.

sistent than this; for in direct opposition to this leading argument he asserts, "that the French treat their negroes better than we do ours, because the French have *few* negroes in proportion to the extent of their estates, and can therefore, without sacrifice, afford to allow large tracts for the provisioning of them¹;" at the same time he remarks, probably with much truth, "that labour and discipline do not constitute the principal hardships of a negro²."

It appears, therefore, from his own arguments, that the only evil which could possibly result to the West Indies from the abolition of the slave trade, would be a temporary check which would be given some few adventurers, who make hazardous purchases of new plantations: and whether this be an evil or not, let those judge who have attended to the author's assertions, that "the profits upon the old estates seldom exceed five or six per cent.³; and that humanity would be shocked, were a catalogue to be exhibited of the European adventurers, who have either prematurely perished or been ruined, or both, in their attempts to effect new settlements⁴."

After all, he is compelled to admit, "that were other European states to concur in the

¹ p. 40 and 41.

² p. 40.

³ p. 4.

⁴ p. 19.

measure,

measure, *nothing could be more salutary than a law for the abolition* of the slave trade, or tend more, not only to prevent the further increase of slavery, but to lessen some of its existing evils; for as the increased price of colony products would be universally commensurate to the decrease of quantity, the real income of the planter would suffer no diminution. He would not have the same inducement to overwork his slaves, and having no other possible source of supply than natural generation, it is probable, in a course of time, that the breeding of negroes, and their preservation, would be more anxiously attended to than at present." Now let it be only considered in addition, that our West India islands do not depend on any foreign markets, and that we can still restrict the home market to the purchase of their commodities; and it will be evident, from these very premises (as was indeed before evident to every candid reasoner) that the very worst consequence which could ensue from the abolition of the slave trade, would be, perhaps, a small temporary rise in the price of rum and sugar, to be necessarily followed by a considerable abatement in the price of those articles.

With respect to the African slave trade, as a distinct branch of commerce, I cannot agree with the general assertion of this author, that "it is considered

considered as the most beneficial of any this nation carries on, in proportion to its extent." I am, perhaps, more conversant with the African trade than this author, and I know it to be a lottery, in which great fortunes have been lost, and great fortunes have been made by the lowest of the people, without a shilling of capital. I will not, however, deny the position, that large sums have been amassed by individuals in this trade; and when I allow this, I allow the utmost that can be said in its favour. I am, both from principle and habit, a friend to commerce, but I must confess that a trade, the utmost utility of which extends no further than the enriching of a few unworthy individuals, the raising up of a few unprincipled men (for such were most of the slave merchants I have known) from the dregs of the populace to a state of luxury and pride, such a trade I cannot esteem of any benefit to a nation. Every branch of commerce is to be esteemed only for the number of industrious hands which it employs at home, or for the improvement of our naval power abroad. Independent of these commerce, even though *guiltless of blood*, is not a blessing but a curse. Now neither of these ends are promoted in any degree by the African slave trade. The bulk of the commodities exported in the present trade to Africa are

are procured from foreigners; they principally consist of India goods, or of cowries and beads, which are procured from the Dutch. The manufacturers of Great Britain are not such senseless enthusiasts as to promote any measure which must ultimately tend to their own destruction: I cannot think the virtue of one town in Lancashire so superior to that of another not forty miles distant, as to suppose that in one of these places a zeal for humanity would lead them to set a seal to their own destruction, and in the other, that the very apprehension of the downfall of this "Diana of the Ephesians" should almost be sufficient to excite tumult and rebellion. The fact is, the leading people of Manchester, Birmingham, &c. are manufacturers, who certainly did not find that their interests would be materially interested by an alteration in this department of commerce; the leading people of Liverpool are all slave merchants, who certainly would be materially affected by the abolition of the slave trade, and who are the only people in the kingdom that would be really affected. There was none of this liberality of sentiment found among the manufacturers of this kingdom, when a free trade was about to be conceded to Ireland; and why? Because in that measure the interest of their manufactures was materially, though I think

think remotely, concerned; in the present it is not.

With respect to the African trade being favourable to the naval interests of this country, I must beg leave to refer the reader to what I have advanced in the last Essay, where I think he will find irrefragable proofs that it is highly unfavourable to this great national object.

As far as the trade is concerned in supplying the islands of our enemies with slaves, this author is decidedly against it; he speaks of it, as "not at all useful to this country," and adds, "that it may and ought to be discouraged." In this every friend to the commercial interests of this country, every friend to our West India colonies, must necessarily unite; and as the author whom I am combating is really a man of excellent abilities, his arguments, when he is upon good ground, are not to be resisted.

I have seen other arguments, which this West India planter is too sensible to employ: the principal of these is, that absurd and uncircumstantial declamation, which alledges the immense quantity of existing evil in the world, beyond our power to remedy; which refers us, with a kind of malignant triumph, to the calamities endured, even in this country, by indigent multitudes; to the numbers whose existence is shortened by misfortunes

fortunes and distress. Nay, with a zeal which has transported them far beyond the boundaries of common sense, or has at least induced them to think meanly of the common sense of others, some apologists have not scrupled to assert, that the poor of this nation are in a more deplorable situation than the negroes on our plantations. Now, in the first place, let it be observed that this argument, if admitted to be any argument at all, as in truth it is not, would go to prove, that because much evil exists in the world, it is absurd and romantic to attempt to lessen the accumulation of it: by this mode of arguing, all human laws, which have for their object the lessening of the sum of moral evil, the prevention of injustice and oppression, are folly and absurdity, since, after all, some instances must remain, which cannot possibly be provided against. But in reality, it is an insult on our understandings, to compare the situation of the poor in this country, with that of the negroes on the plantations. Do the poorest in this country labour hard, and yet subsist upon a pint of beans per diem?—Are they compelled to labour, whether willing or not, for sixteen hours; and are they called to this labour by the sound of the whip? Are they subjected to the lust, the caprice, the cruelty of planters, drivers, &c. &c.? Are they whipped, tortured,

D d

mained,

mained, murdered, at the discretion of another? —What must be the cause that resorts to such pretences as this in its support!

A very intelligent writer, who, in a periodical paper entitled the Repository, assumes the signature of a West Indian, and appears as a moderator, for I cannot call him an advocate in this dispute, has indeed defended his countrymen with much ability from the indiscriminate charge of cruelty and inhumanity; but even he admits of sufficient to justify the charge of cruelty and injustice, if not on the West Indians in particular, at least on the permission of the state of slavery in general. I candidly believe with this writer, and with another shrewd and well-informed advocate of the West Indians¹, that many of the planters, perhaps the majority, really feel as much for their slaves, as the nature of an established system of slavery will admit.—It is not against the conduct of individuals that my animadversions are pointed, it is against the circumstance itself, it is against the principle.—I must repeat what I have before asserted; slavery is itself an abuse, it must be pregnant with abuses and evils: if I have mentioned particular facts, it was only to establish this general position, and to prove that what is evil in

¹ Mr. Tobin.

its principle, must be productive of abundant evils in its effects. On one point I must, however, beg to set this author right; he seems to intimate that the cruelties, which are inflicted on the negroes in our colonies, were totally overlooked, till "a solitary clergyman, in 1785, told the tale of horror."—On this subject it is only necessary to remind him of the names of Benezet, of Westley, of Sharpe, and of Warburton. — I was myself in possession of all the facts related in the preceding Essays, long before I had so much as heard Mr. Ramsay's name; and my first edition was also published early in 1785, and too soon after Mr. Ramsay's book appeared, to be copied from his, or even suggested by it.

The animadversions of this amiable and accomplished writer, on the advantages which might be derived by the West Indians from the conversion of the colony slaves to the Christian religion, are such as may excite the emulation if not the envy of the most zealous writer of the opposite party; and the arguments which he has addressed to his brother planters, in favour of the humane treatment of their negroes, are so cogent and affecting, that the West Indian who is not influenced by such reasoning, must be not only deaf to every feeling of humanity, but to the

more general and more prevailing voice of self-interest itself.

It is impossible to remark, without the deepest regret, that so liberal and cultivated a mind should, by the force of early prejudice, by some participation of interest, or possibly by a timidity of disposition, be induced to view with a degree of reluctance that generous and upright measure, the principle of which, abstractedly considered, he professes in the highest terms to approve. That any enlightened understanding should appear, I will not say as the friend, but as the tame spectator of slavery, may appear extraordinary: but those who think so, are unacquainted with the power of habit in subduing the best propensities of our nature. Perhaps the rage of commerce has in the present age been carried too far; I think we have injured our moral feelings by indulging in the excess of a passion, undoubtedly laudable to a certain degree. We are too much accustomed to consider *profit* in all our speculations: we owe much to commerce as a nation, and we are naturally disposed to conceive that we cannot be too grateful.

On the most impartial review, however, of what I have written, I can lay my hand on my heart and aver, that according to all those great principles of policy, which authors of the highest reputation,

reputation, and my own attentive reflexion, have taught me to consider as the soundest and most salutary, the slave trade appears to be conducive in no one respect to the real prosperity of this country.—It neither improves our navy nor encourages our manufactures. It does not appear necessary to the support of our West India possessions; while it diverts our attention from objects more laudable, and from enterprizes which I apprehend might produce more permanent advantages.

Were it not that mankind are naturally averse to innovation; were it not that the timidity of all classes of men, but especially of ministers, is more easily wrought upon than any other principle; were it not that the present interest of individuals renders them active in imposing on the nation, while there is no prospect of present emolument held forth to the other party to counteract this strong and persevering spirit; were it not, in fine, that pecuniary gain is too much the object of all political speculations in the present age, I have not a doubt but the legislature, as well as the people, would presently see the disgrace, the iniquity, the evil-policy, of this nefarious traffic.

But to view the question in the most unfavourable light—Suppose that to lessen the emoluments of a few individuals be accounted a national

tional evil, and suppose the gain of a few thousands annually a national good; suppose that some defalcation in the revenue must ensue; and that we must experience some rise in the price of a few articles of luxury—Is there nothing due to the honour of the British nation?—Is there nothing due to the cause of liberty, of justice, and of religion?—Is nothing to be trusted to the
favour

“ I should have thought it necessary to notice the pretended religious apologies which have appeared, had I not been anticipated by a sensible writer in one of the news-papers, whose letter I shall take the liberty of inserting verbatim.

To the Printer of the Gazetteer.

“ What a pother there’s here about wenching and roaring:
“ Why David lov’d catches, and Solomon whoring—
“ Did not Israel steal from th’ Egyptians of old
“ Their jewels of silver, and jewels of gold?
“ The prophet of Bethel, we read, told a lie—
“ He drinks, so did Noah; he swears—so do I.”

The Cambridge Courtship, attributed to Mr. Gray.

The Bible and Junius will be read, when the Commentaries of the Jesuits are forgotten.”

Junius’s Letters.

Sir,

have lately seen some very feeble attempts to prove the *licitness* of the slave trade from the Scriptures, which I am induced to notice through the channel of your useful paper, rather for their novelty than their importance. The first appeal made in this case is to the Old Testament; but I fear, if we are to take the *practice* of the *Jews* for our model, there

is

favour of the Divine Providence; nothing to the spirit and resources of the nation?

The

is scarcely any enormity, moral or religious, which may not admit of justification; and, unless we suppose with our blessed Lord, that “many things were permitted them for the *hardness* of their hearts;” that is, on *account of the ignorance and barbarism, which at the time of the Jewish dispensation not only pervaded that nation, but the whole world*, there are many breaches of morality allowed, in even the Jewish law, besides *polygamy*, which may induce weak minds to doubt of its divine authority. We are told that the “letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive.” I have ever, Sir, been accustomed to think the spirit of the Christian law to be, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;” and “Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them, for this is the *law and the prophets*.” Now, Sir, if the dragging of a fellow-creature into the most rigid slavery, or being accessory to it, be not *doing unto him, as we would not wish he should do unto us*, I forfeit all pretensions to common-sense. It is written, “Thou shalt do no *murder*;” and “Surely your blood of your lives will I require, at the hand of *even every beast* will I require it.” Let the slave-merchant then only reflect, how many thousands of innocent victims he is the undoubted means of bringing to a premature and miserable end; and let him dare to tell me, that his trade is not contrary to the *spirit* of the law as well as the gospel.

I do assert, Sir, that the New Testament affords not the slightest colour for the licitness of the slave trade. St. Paul in one or two places exhorts such of his disciples, as have the misfortune to be in a state of slavery, to endure it with meekness and patience; but surely it is a most curious mode of ex-
position

The ignominious example of Spain has been lately adduced on another occasion, by one of the most distinguished orators that ever adorned this or any other country. It was the love of gain, and the influx of wealth which immerfed that nation in the loweft abyfs of contempt. It corrupted her morals, it deftroyed her activity, it weakened her natural powers, and funk her free citizens into flaves. It was the contrary principle, it was a regard to the honour and character of the nation, that raifed ancient Rome to be the admiration, and the miftrefs of the world.

There is public as well as private avarice ; nor would it be difficult to prove, that the former is by far the more dangerous vice. An admini-

stration
 position to conclude from this, that the act of reducing them to slavery is lawful and meritorious. The difciples are alfo exhorted to “ rejoice and be exceeding glad, when men perfecute and revile them ; to take up their crofs,” &c. ; by the fame rule, therefore, perfecution is lawful and meritorious : and it muft be confefsed, that the Church of Rome has ever acted moft *scripturally* according to this mode of interpretation.

These speculations are admirably calculated to make infidels, fince many well-difpofed perfons will chufe rather to part with their religion than their common-fenfe ; will rather believe a fyftem falfe, than that the Deity can be cruel and unjuft ; if by the craft and ingenuity of designing men, they can be reduced to this alternative. I trust, however, that (in
 fpite

stration which shall disgrace the cabinet by the parsimony of the counting-house—which shall guard with a suspicious eye the expenditure of fractions, and endeavour not to improve the virtue and magnanimity, but merely to increase the riches of the nation—such an administration is neither suited to the temper, the situation, nor the civil constitution of Britain. It was not the narrow and selfish policy of a Wolsey, a Villiers, or a Walpole, that gave consequence, power,

spite of the efforts of its avowed adversaries, *or pretended friends*) the more our religion is explored, the more consistent it will be found with reason, justice, and truth: “the Devil can cite scripture for his purpose,” and

“What damned error, but some sober brow

“Will bless it, and approve it with a text?”

I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

April 12th.

NO INFIDEL IN DISGUISE.

I have nothing to add to this able refutation, but that it appears from the whole of the gospel history, that both our Saviour and his disciples most cautiously avoided every kind of interference with the civil and political state of the countries where they resided. Their aim was to reform the *sentiments*, the *principles*, and *habits* of the mind, and they left these to work such changes in public affairs, as were agreeable to the spirit of the gospel. Some of the civil governments at that time, were the most unjust, tyrannical, and impolitic, that could be imagined; yet the disciples are exhorted to *submit* even to these unjust *ordinances*. N.

and prosperity to this kingdom; it was the deep forecast of a Burleigh, the enlarged patriotism of a Vane, and the enterprize of a Chatham.

Unless the sceptre of this, as well as every other great monarchy, be established in righteousness, the genius of the statesman will be exerted in vain. — Under the contemptible influence of Machiavelian politics, should our riches increase, they will increase only to corrupt, to injure, and to overwhelm us; should our commerce extend, it will be a commerce, not to benefit, but to debilitate the nation, to enrich individuals, while the public is oppressed; should our military power apparently flourish, it will be a power, not to defend, but to exterminate public liberty.



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